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ABSTRACT

A selection of papers presented at an international conference on the role of language in economic and social development includes: "Changing Paradigms: The Project Approach" (John McGovern); "Team Development of ELT Projects: A Case Study" (William M. Martin, Lynn P. Balabanis); "The Roles of Insiders and Outsiders in Evaluating English Language Programmes and Projects" (Cyril J. Weir); "Problematising Stakeholders: Who Are the Holders and What Are the Stakes?" (Hywel Coleman); "Power and Sustainability in Language-Related Development Projects" (Harvey Smith); "Counterpart Training and Sustainability: Effecting an Exchange of Skills" (Andrea Flew); "Managing Self-Access in Development: Three Perspectives" (Margaretha Kafudji, Patrice North, Denise Finney); "Ensuring Sustainability of Language Centres After Development Projects" (Nangsari Ahmad, Patrick L. Adlam); "A Modular Training Framework: An Appropriate Response to the Issues of Relevance and Home Environment Application in a Teacher Education Project?" (David Lochmohr Prescott); "Dialogue Journals and Negotiating Innovations: Appropriate Technology Reconsidered" (Jonathan Shaw); "'They've Got a Problem with English': Perceptions of the Difficulties of International Postgraduate Students" (Marian May, Annie Bartlett); "How Critical Is Critical Thinking? A Generic Issue for Language in Development" (Brigid Ballard); "Empowering Women Language Teachers in Cambodia" (Kath Copley); "Politics in the Classroom: Teacher-Training in Cambodia" (Psyche Kennett); "Reaching the Critical Mass: Planning Voter Education in South Africa" (Sarah Slabbert); and "The Politics of Development: The Languages of Industrialization" (Chaiskran Hiranpruk). Most papers contain references. (MSE)

LANGUAGE and DEVELOPMENT



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Language and Development

Language and Development

Edited by

Tony Crooks and Geoffrey Crewes

Indonesia Australia Language Foundation



The IALF is a self-supporting, non-profit educational institution that exists to promote national development in Indonesia and elsewhere in Southeast Asia through the provision of high-quality language services. It operates language centres in Jakarta and Bali, and through its Projects Unit supports teachers and consultants throughout Indonesia and the region. The IALF is the Founding Chair of the Association for Language and Development in Asia.

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Editors' introduction

Most people, when asked about development, will orient their thinking towards economic and social issues related to development, not fully realizing the crucial nature of language and communication in the resolution of these issues. Language and communication are frequently taken for granted, until continued progress in economic and social development runs into constraints, rooted in language and communication problems. Too frequently, language and communication issues are treated peripherally to the development process. Therefore, it is a pleasure for me, in my capacity as Minister of Education and Culture of the Republic of Indonesia, to express my full support for this Conference, and to clearly acknowledge that language and communication are of fundamental importance to any country's development.

With these words Dr Wardiman Djojonegoro (1995: 2) opened the Second International Conference on Language in Development in Bali, Indonesia on 10 April 1995. Over the following three days almost 100 presenters representing 25 countries from around the globe substantiated the Minister's comments, as they took the floor to recount their tales of triumph or of opportunity lost, to share their insights, their frustrations, their hopes and aspirations with their colleagues involved, in a variety of roles, in the field of Language and Development.

The Conference was organized by the Indonesia Australia Language Foundation (IALF), in collaboration with the Bangkok-based Asian Institute of Technology (AIT) and the National Centre for English Language Teaching and Research (NCELTR) of Macquarie University, Sydney. It was conceived as a follow-up to the first such Conference, hosted by AIT in 1993, where the idea emerged that the topic was of sufficient importance to justify a biennial seminar, which would be rotated through the countries of the region.

The theme of the Bali Conference was "Language and Communication in Development: Stakeholders' Perspectives". The papers presented demonstrated an extraordinarily diverse range of interpretations of and approaches to this theme, and bore eloquent testimony to the depth of perception and breadth of experience of colleagues in this field. Nevertheless, it has been possible, for reasons of economy of space, to publish only a selection of the papers presented at the Conference; that selection constitutes the present volume.

The themes identified in this collection were among those that appeared to us to be particularly significant or recurrent; hence the papers are intended to be taken to represent issues of broad general interest and application. At the same time, we are confident that each is a worthwhile contribution to the emerging field of Language in Development, and it is hoped that their publication here will provide the stimulus for further discussion of the concepts and insights they afford.

Mindful of Ted Rodgers' (1990) pronouncement that the hallmark of cutting-edge scholarship in the 1990s is that it comes packaged in fours, the 16 papers in this volume have been organized, with all due intellectual rigour, into Quadrants, with the four papers in each Quadrant being thematically linked.

The first Quadrant examines issues relating to the design and evaluation of developmental English Language Training (ELT) projects. The collection opens with **John McGovern's** keynote paper looking at the "project approach" as a potential model for the diffusion of ELT innovations. While acknowledging the criticism levelled at the project approach by ELT personnel, McGovern notes that it is viewed by donor governments and agencies as an effective means of achieving their aims while controlling expenditure. He therefore recommends that, rather than attempt to overturn the model, the efforts of ELT professionals should be focused on *adapting* the approach to make it more appropriate to ELT projects, while at the same time demonstrating to sponsors that such adaptations are capable of producing greater project impact without incurring additional costs. The paper concludes with a consideration of a number of proposed strategies as to how this goal might be accomplished. In this wide-ranging discussion, McGovern also touches on a number of issues that reflect the concerns of other authors in this volume: the diffusion of innovations (*cf.* the papers by Kafudji *et al.* and Shaw); the empowerment of "insiders" (*cf.* Weir; Smith); measuring impact (*cf.* Coleman); and the need for a high level of interpersonal skills and cross-cultural awareness on the part of project personnel (*cf.* Flew).

In the second paper, **William Martin and Lynn Balabanis** report on the successful collaborative planning process for the establishment of a language centre in Egypt. After reviewing the traditional "top-down" process of project design and indicating some of the difficulties and frustrations this can lead to, they introduce by way of contrast the "Working Party" mechanism, whereby the personnel who are to be responsible for the implementation of a project are involved also in its planning phase. The authors describe their positive experiences as members of a such a team, explain the principal benefits of the model, and offer practical suggestions to readers interested in establishing a Working Party of their own.

The two remaining papers in this Quadrant are both concerned in different ways with the issue of evaluation of language training projects. Cyril Weir presents a case for an integrated approach to evaluation, incorporating both formative and summative dimensions and involving both insiders and outsiders. With reference to evaluation studies carried out in Nepal, India and the UK, he demonstrates the value of insider participation in data collection both for developmental purposes and to meet external accountability demands, though he cautions of the need to retain some form of external moderation, both in order to enhance reliability and, perhaps more importantly, for its catalytic effect.

In order to evaluate the impact of a project, it is necessary first to establish what it is that is being measured - and with reference to whom. Starting from the premise that human activities have, in complicated and unpredictable ways, repercussions for beyond their *intended* impact, Hywel Coleman seeks to identify precisely who are the stakeholders in a language training project. The model he puts forward for measuring the impact of training activity highlights the complexity and the dynamic nature of project impact, and leads him to an interpretation of the term *stakeholder* that is much broader in scope than more traditional, "prescriptive" definitions have tended to be. The implications for evaluation are drawn out in a case study assessing the impact of an ELT Management training program for a group of Indonesian teachers.

Sustainability, the continuation of project impact after the life of the project, is a key concept in international development programs. Quadrant II groups together four papers that, in one way or another, are concerned with the issue of sustainability of language projects. For Harvey Smith, the key to sustainability is the transfer of power - the power that foreign project advisers are often granted, or assume - to the local personnel who will need to make the important decisions after the project has come to an end. He reviews the enabling privileges of power, with specific reference to the situation in Cambodia; details the obstacles to the empowerment of local staff; and proposes a range of strategies for dealing with such obstacles. He concludes with a suggestion that a commitment to ensuring the transfer of power might be sought from recipient organizations, along with the standard commitments to provide structure and budget, prior to the start-up of a project.

Andrea Flew considers the role of counterparting in achieving sustainability. She offers a definition of counterparting as a mutually beneficial, two-way process whereby knowledge and skills are combined in order to achieve agreed project goals. Drawing on her experience as a team-member on two development projects in Vietnam, she highlights the contribution of the knowledge, insights and expertise of local counterparts in effecting the changes sought, and suggests that in order

to ensure that maximum benefit is obtained from the counterparting relationship, greater emphasis needs to be placed on appropriate interpersonal skills and cross-cultural awareness in the selection of project personnel.

The next two papers are both from Indonesia. While not the explicit focus of their paper, a concern for the sustainability of their project is very much apparent in the examination by **Margaretha Kafudji, Patrice North and Denise Finney** of the process of developing a Self-access Resource Centre from their respective perspectives as Head of the recipient organization, representative of the donor agency, and external consultant contracted in to provide technical assistance. The authors explore individual and shared perceptions of their roles in and contributions to each of the four major stages in the development process: initiation, implementation, evaluation and sustainability. The paper identifies perceived successes and constraints in the process to date, and highlights areas where action will need to be taken if future sustainability of the Centre is to be achieved.

Such a concern is shared by **Nangsari Ahmad and Patrick Adlam**, who address the issue of ensuring the sustainability of university language centres once development project funding has ceased. They trace the evolution of language centres in Indonesia, pointing out where mistakes have been made and opportunities lost for promoting sustainability, and they suggest that, by focusing on the provision of predeparture ELT for scholarship awardees on development projects to the exclusion of other language-related activities, language centres were effectively condemned to redundancy once development project inputs had come to an end. However, the authors perceive a window of opportunity for redemption if language centres can take advantage of recent changes in legislation on higher education in Indonesia to create for themselves a wider role in the institutional strengthening of their host universities.

At the heart of language projects lies the learning/teaching process and the learners themselves; the papers in Quadrant III all relate to curriculum issues: course design, methodology and approaches. In the first paper in this section, **David Prescott** reports on the design of a teacher education program for a group of ELT professionals from Lao PDR. He describes how the need to satisfy competing demands, on the one hand to provide the funding agency with a clear course design structure and on the other to ensure flexibility to allow for significant variations in trainees' levels of language proficiency and training needs, were accommodated by means of a modular framework in which components were specified in advance, but content within each module remained open to negotiation with the various groups of trainees.

Moving in to the classroom, **Jonathan Shaw** presents a case study of the use of dialogue journals as a technology which enabled teachers to negotiate an innovatory educational approach with a group of language learners in Vietnam. Reflection on this experience leads him to challenge Numa Markee's appropriate technology model of communicative course design, and to propose in its stead a model based on concepts drawn from the literature on the diffusion of educational innovations.

The last two papers in this Quadrant address the topic of the academic difficulties experienced by international students in English-medium educational institutions. **Marian May and Annie Bartlett** question the common perception that an inadequate grasp of English is the major cause of these difficulties. Basing their claim on a number of case studies, they contend that, at the postgraduate level, there is no correlation between English language proficiency on admission to a study program and eventual academic success, and they call for a more flexible approach to language entry requirements. At the same time, they propose a focused, discipline-specific academic skills program as an effective way of making clear to students the expectations of the discipline in a particular academic community. In this way, they suggest, it will be possible to avoid the "deficit" view of a remedial approach to the differences in background of graduate students.

The influence of genre-based approaches to language training, apparent in May and Bartlett's discussion, is evident too in the ideas of their colleague **Brigid Ballard**, though the latter's principal interest lies in the field of critical thinking. Observing that the expression and practice of critical thinking and analysis - the basic tools of western university education - are culturally shaped, Ballard argues that language teachers have an important role to play in helping students recognize the nature of critical thinking through close analysis of the discourse of their own fields of specialization. She goes on to propose a methodology for inculcating in students a disposition for reflective scepticism which, she suggests, will not only assist them in their studies, but is also the most important skill they can later bring to the development needs of their nation.

Shifting the focus somewhat, the fourth and final Quadrant in this volume moves beyond the domain of language projects and programs and into the external world, into the realm of politics. The first two papers deal with the situation in Cambodia, where language training has long been a highly-charged political issue. **Kath Copley** offers a historical overview of language education in the country before going on to deplore the minor role that Cambodian women have had - and continue to have - in the process. She puts forward explanations for the under-representation of women trainees on language teacher-training programs, and describes ways in which her own project has attempted to sensitize teachers to the issues of gender in education.

The paper concludes with a call for two further - potentially controversial - steps to be taken: affirmative action for women candidates in the selection process for teacher-training courses, and the temporary introduction of single-sex education in schools in order to ensure that girls receive equitable time and attention from their teachers.

Psyche Kennett, meanwhile, discovers that in a country where the English language was forbidden until 1990, teacher-training programs in the Communicative Approach can appear to be radical to the point of subversion. Seemingly innocuous methodological concerns such as groupwork or seating arrangements assume political dimensions that can work against the introduction of innovations. Nevertheless, the author remains confident that, due partly to the efforts of development projects such as the one on which she works, a "quiet revolution" is beginning to take place in Cambodian classrooms.

The crucial role played by language issues in the process of nation-building is highly apparent in the paper by **Sarah Slabbert**, who reviews the communication process that was developed to conduct a voter education campaign aimed at preparing the previously disenfranchized African community to participate effectively in South Africa's first democratic national election. With 11 official languages in the country and a highly complex situation in terms of language status and language attitudes, the choice of languages in which to conduct the campaign was a delicate issue - and one crucial to the success of the elections. No less important to the communication process was the choice of media through which to reach the voters. Slabbert offers her evaluation of the voter education campaign as an assessment of the communication structures that are available for future development work.

The final paper, written by **Chaiskran Hiranpruk**, deals essentially with language *about* development. The author examines the various terminologies that have been used over the years by sociologists and economists in formulating their development theories, and she points out that the language we use to discuss development inevitably influences our understanding of what development is. A perceived over-emphasis in Southeast Asian countries on economic indicators of development at the expense of social progress is, she suggests, due partly to the currency among bureaucrats and among the general public of the language of economists; by implication, the change of outlook required to address the region's social problems might be achieved through a conscious change in the terminology used to speak about development.

It will be evident from this overview of the collection that the present volume represents an informed and insightful examination, from a wide range of perspectives, of some of the key current issues in Language and Development. As such, it is

offered as a contribution to the small but growing body of literature in this interdisciplinary field of enquiry.

In his paper in this volume, McGovern (p.7) deplores our past failures to document our work; however, as Martin and Balabanis (p.16f) point out, there are indications that this state of affairs is changing. There are also promising signs that many who have been working in the field in apparent virtual isolation are waking up to the fact that they are not alone, that a community of colleagues exists that empathizes with their achievements and their disappointments and that is willing to share the benefits of its collective experience. Publications such as Allwright and Waters (1994), Kenny and Savage (forthcoming) and - in all humility - the present volume; events such as the Lancaster *LAP 2000* Colloquium and the Bangkok and Bali Conferences; the formation in the aftermath of the Bali Conference of the Association for Language and Development in Asia (ALDA): all attest to the emergence of an international network of Language and Development practitioners. The next step, now that we are talking to each other, is to seek greater dialogue between practitioners and the funding agencies - a challenge, perhaps, for the 1997 Third International Conference on Language in Development in Kuala Lumpur. We look forward to seeing you there.

Tony Crooks
Geoffrey Crewes

Bali, October 1995

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Quadrant I

LANGUAGE PROJECT DESIGN AND EVALUATION

Changing paradigms: the project approach

John McGovern

***Abstract:** Over the past 40 years there has been a great deal of innovation in English Language Training (ELT). The method by which such innovation has been diffused in many parts of the world has been the project approach. This paper sets out to explore the suitability and effectiveness of the approach as a model for the diffusion of ELT innovation. It proposes a change of emphasis within project design, implementation and evaluation in order to empower the "insider" and suggests ways in which such change might be achieved.*

The pace and nature of change in ELT since the 1950s

The pace of change in English Language Training (ELT) over the past 40 years has been quite remarkable. We have seen, for example, the development of a series of major new approaches: structural, situational, functional/notional, humanistic, communicative, natural, task-based, lexical, and now there is talk of a "post-communicative" approach. These developments have taken place in parallel with another equally remarkable phenomenon, namely the increase in the use of English as an international language. Clearly this is no coincidence. Since the 1950s, and particularly since the growth and spread of communications and information technology in the 1970s, the demand for English has outstripped all predictions. This demand led to the creation of an ELT industry which, like any new industry, needed a research and development capability. The sources of this capability were mainly British and American departments of Applied Linguistics, a discipline which is itself also new.

The result of this research and development has been radical changes in ELT in terms of content, methods, techniques, technology, mode, testing and training. Indeed, the number and nature of these changes have been such that it is appropriate to speak of a shift in the paradigm for foreign language education. But this has not been a paradigm shift of the Kuhnian type. We have not seen one world-view replaced overnight by a different world-view which has immediately changed the thinking and practices of everyone working in the field of ELT. Instead, there are now several competing, though some might say complementary, views of what is the most effective way to teach the language. The ambiguity in the title of this

paper is deliberate: the project approach has been used to try to change the paradigm of how English should be taught and English language teachers trained, but the paradigm itself is still in a state of flux. The result has been the establishment of an implementation continuum, with some teachers and education systems having adopted many of the new ideas whilst others, for very many different reasons, have hardly been touched by them. In the middle range of the continuum are all those practitioners who describe their position as eclectic.

Introduction and development of the project approach model

In light of the rise of English as the language of international communication, it is not surprising to find that by the 1970s many developing or newly-emerging nations began to make requests for support for the development of ELT in their countries, particularly to bilateral aid agencies. They continue to do so: the collapse of the former Soviet Union has led to a plethora of such requests to both bilateral and multilateral agencies. Governments and institutions around the world believe that improving the English communication skills of key sectors of their population is essential for the social and economic development of their countries.

In the 1970s certain aid agencies, such as the UK Government's Overseas Development Administration (ODA), agreed to provide this support. British support to ELT overseas up until the 1970s had been the responsibility of the British Council, the UK's cultural agency. The British Council's support model at that time was to provide resources and personnel to existing programmes. (An example of this was its scheme for placing "lectors" in universities throughout Eastern and Central European universities.) ODA decided not to try to replicate the work of the British Council. Instead, it channelled the aid money for ELT through the British Council's overseas network of English Language Officers. However, the ODA's support model was different from that of the British Council, in that it favoured support to *projects* rather than to programmes: thus was born the project approach. The aim was to diffuse the ideas coming out of the centres for research and development in order to make the teaching of English more efficient and effective.

It took several years for the approach to take root. The British Council's *Dunford House Seminar Reports* (1979-1992) chart the process. Since the introduction of the approach in the 1970s, literally hundreds of ELT projects in a wide range of countries across the world have been given support. There have been different types of projects for the different education and training sectors: in the primary and secondary sectors, the bulk of the aid has gone on the provision of textbooks,

pre-service and in-service training, examinations and the development of teacher resource centres; while in the tertiary sector the main foci of projects have been: the development of language centres, in-service training, self-access learning, English for Specific Purposes (ESP) and graduate programme development.

The influence of the project approach continues to spread. The British Council has adopted the approach in allocating its own funds for ELT: during the period 1991-94 at least 60 new projects were established by the British Council in the countries of the former Soviet Union. In 1992 the World Bank, for the first time in its history, decided to lend money (US\$ 18.5 million) to Hungary in support of more than 50 foreign language education projects. The European Union has also begun to donate large sums of money for this purpose, especially to the countries of Eastern and Central Europe. Both the World Bank and the European Union have used the project approach. Even governments that do not receive aid funding have adopted the approach. It is the only way governments and international organizations have found to date to support educational innovation whilst controlling expenditure. As pressure on public expenditure budgets for education continues to increase, it is likely that this trend will continue.

Review of the project approach model for ELT

Based on our experiences of ELT projects over the last two decades, perhaps we are now in a position to review the approach and to evaluate how successful the model has been in the diffusion of ELT innovations. I will first set out the rationale for the approach; I will then go on to indicate some of its key operational features, and finally point out some of the criticisms frequently levelled at the approach.

As mentioned above, the major advantage of the project approach to development is that it allows funding agencies to control expenditure. The approach was not formulated specifically for ELT; it had previously been used for some time by aid and other agencies to organize the funding of capital investment schemes. For the building of a new road, for example, funds would need to be committed for up to five or even ten years in advance. It is not surprising, therefore, that many of the touchstone ideas that underpin the approach and that are constantly referred to in project documentation have a financial ring to them. **Accountability** is perhaps the most fundamental of these. Linked to this is the concept of **value for money**: at both the appraisal stage and the termination stage the project must be able to demonstrate that it represents good value for money by comparison with other competing projects, and not just with projects in the education sector. The project

must also be able to demonstrate that it is a worthwhile investment by showing that it is **sustainable**. Moreover, in order to ensure that the money has been both properly and effectively spent, an **evaluation system** is essential.

The ultimate purpose of a donor-funded project is to assist with economic and social development. Mechanisms must therefore be found for measuring the economic and social impacts of the project. Over the last few years it has become increasingly common for aid agencies such as ODA to send economists or sociologists to evaluate an ELT project, the rationale being that these are seen as being the professional groups that have the specialist tools required for measuring such impacts. The entry on to the evaluation scene of sociologists has led to an ever-increasing emphasis being placed on the demonstration of **equity**: the project must be of benefit to those sections of society in the recipient country that, in the opinion of the aid agency, are in most need.

I hope that this description of the rationale underlying the project approach demonstrates that the approach was never advanced as a model for the diffusion of innovation. Rather, it has always been primarily a model for the control of expenditure.

With regard to the operational features of the project approach, the key theme is **specificity**. There must be:

- specific **objectives**
- a specific **time-frame**
- a specific **budget** for each year of the project
- specific types of project **documentation** for each year of the project
- specific **reporting procedures**
- specific measures of **evaluation**
- specific statements of **risks and conditions**

The approach is often criticized by ELT project personnel. One frequent criticism has been that the approach is more suited to economic infrastructure projects like road construction than it is to education projects. The impact of innovation in education takes a long time. The project approach operates within too short a time-frame - usually three years - for proper evaluation of educational benefits to be conducted. The evaluation therefore has to concentrate on the number and the cost of the "products" of the project rather than on the value of the process by which they were produced. Another commonly-voiced criticism is that the approach is too command-driven, too top-down. Project implementers have to work to a blue-print which was not of their own devising and which, on implementation, often turns out to have been ill-conceived.

A lack of documentation and other problems

On the basis of the large number of ELT projects that have been completed over the past two decades, it should be possible to determine whether any project or any particular type of project has been a success or a failure and why. Unfortunately this is not the case.

The main problem is that there is so little documentation available. Though we may personally know of many undoubted successes or failures, we cannot point to them in the literature. Only a small number of the hundreds of ELT projects that have been implemented have been written up or even recorded as having taken place at all. Of the small number that *have* been written up, few are analytical, while many are of the "war stories and romances" variety. And of those that *are* analytical, some have been written in such a way that only an ELT specialist can understand them. There has been very little research conducted and hence there is a very limited literature on the subject of measuring project effectiveness, though recently this situation does seem to be improving.

Professionally, this lack of documentation has proven disastrous, both externally and internally. Externally, it has meant that some of the traditional sponsors of ELT aid projects have become suspicious of a profession that does not monitor and develop its own project performance. Internally, it has meant that new project personnel have been unable to learn from past successes and failures. There are still no guidelines available as to what works and what does not work. Such guidelines would have been invaluable, for example, to personnel involved in setting up the new projects in the countries of the former Soviet Union during the early 1990s.

At the same time, however, though we may not be able to paint a general picture of success or failure, we have learnt that ELT projects, of whatever type, seem to be susceptible to the same sorts of problems. The most pressing set of problems are those connected with the **burden of proof**: how can, say, the economic value or the sustainability of an ELT project be demonstrated? Perhaps this inability to shoulder the burden of proof is the main reason behind the lack of research and documentation. Researchers and project personnel have not yet discovered how to prove to sponsors, at one level, that their innovation has worked and, at another level, that it has produced the kind of economic and social development the sponsor was seeking.

A second common set of problems concerns how, given the criticisms referred to above, one can **adapt the project approach** to make it more suitable for an ELT project. And the third set is generally viewed as comprising **operational**

problems - those relating to questions of control, ownership, time-frames, resistance, communication and workload. (I would, however, argue that these problems are in fact more structural than operational.)

These three sets of problems are present in all projects but they often vary in their level of importance, depending on the degree of external funding and the presence or absence of foreign advisers. In the remainder of this paper I will consider a possible way forward to try to resolve some of these problems.

Alternative diffusion models

The conclusion I draw from the above discussion about the project approach is that it is primarily a model designed to provide accountability for expenditure. It is not, and has never been claimed to be, a model for the diffusion of educational innovation. For this we must look elsewhere.

We have spent very little time as a profession reflecting on how we go about changing a paradigm, diffusing an innovation. Markee (1993: 229) observes that:

The last two decades in applied linguistics have seen the development of a number of language innovations...All of these proposals have contributed in important ways to an understanding of theoretical issues related to designing innovative language syllabuses. But it is only rather recently that applied linguists have begun to investigate the problems associated with implementing these innovations.

Fortunately, there has been a considerable amount of research into the diffusion of innovation carried out over the past 30 years by sociologists and educationalists in the USA. Their work has mainly centred on innovation in American schools. Their thinking is beginning to make its way into ELT (see White 1988, 1993) and into discussions about the diffusion of ELT ideas (Henrichsen 1989; Stoller 1994).

Havelock (1971) distinguishes between three different models of innovation. The first of these is the Research, Development and Diffusion (RD & D) Model, which views change as essentially a rational process. Successful innovation occurs when the implementers realize or are brought to realize the force of the ideas the innovation represents. The Council of Europe projects of the 1970s are cited by Markee (1993) as examples of this model. The concept of "appropriate technology" is missing from such a model. Havelock's second model is the problem-solving approach,

which seeks to derive solutions from classroom research. The "reflective approach" to teacher-training fits this model, and the co-trainer (COT) training course in Budapest (Bodoczky & Malderez 1994) is an example of this. The third model he proposes, that of social interaction, is based on the theory that the most critical factor in the diffusion of an educational innovation is social relationships. Designers and implementers must understand the relationships that obtain amongst and between the various stakeholders from the beginning through to the end of the attempt to introduce the innovation.

Fullan (1991) seems to abhor the RD & D Model, and seeks to combine the problem-solving and social interaction models. There are several important lessons we need to absorb from his work. His words speak for themselves:

Most changes, even the big restructuring ones, have a pacifier effect because they give the appearance that something substantial is happening when it is not. (p.352)

One of the basic reasons why planning fails is that planners or decision-makers of change are unaware of the situations that potential implementers are facing. They introduce changes without providing a means to identify and confront the situational constraints and without attempting to understand the values, ideas and experiences of those who are essential for implementing any changes. (p.96)

If this finding is true of educational projects in the USA, how much truer it must be of ELT projects that, by definition, operate in a cross-cultural context.

Assume that any significant innovation, if it is to result in change, requires individual implementers to work out their own meanings...effective implementation is a process of clarification. (p.106)

The answer is found not by seeking ready-made guidelines, but by struggling to understand and modify events and processes that are intrinsically complicated, difficult to pin down, and ever-changing. (p.107)

Assume that conflict and disagreement are not only inevitable but fundamental to successful change...Smooth implementation is often the sign that not much is really changing. (p.106)

Evolutionary planning and problem-coping models based on knowledge of the change process are essential. (p.107)

It is best to start small, experiment, and expand the successful. (p.109)

Changing the culture of institutions is the real agenda, not implementing single innovations. (p. 107)

But before one can change the culture, of course, one must first of all be able to understand it.

Henrichsen (1989) is, to my knowledge, the only one of the school of writers about educational innovation in the USA to date who has written about the ELT context. Interestingly, he does not dismiss the RD & D model, but suggests a linking of this with Havelock's other models of social interaction and problem-solving.

Classifying the project approach as a model for the diffusion of ELT innovation

It seems to me that ELT innovation over the last 40 years has been of the RD & D type. The creators of innovation have paid scant regard to the factors affecting implementation; making the "technology" appropriate to the context has been seen as a problem for implementers to deal with. Perhaps it is time to establish a branch of Applied Linguistics devoted to issues relating to the diffusion of ELT innovations.

Unfortunately, many ELT project personnel have also been so taken by the abstract beauty of the concepts involved or - understandably, given their training - felt at such a loss to know how to proceed otherwise that they too have ignored the reality of the context in which the innovation is supposed to be diffused. In particular, they have not been sufficiently sensitive to the values and priorities of the teachers and trainers they have been seeking to influence. Too often it has been a very top-down process. The result has not infrequently been resistance, alienation and failure. This is not surprising: in my own experience, the power of the culture of the school, and especially of the staffroom, usually far outweighs the influence of any new set of ideas emanating from outside.

Havelock does not discuss the project approach to the diffusion of innovation; however, I would support the argument that the approach is capable of fitting any of his models. In practice, though, ELT projects have tended to the RD & D Model which Fullan (1991), Henrichsen (1989), Markee (1993) and Stoller (1994) all suggest usually leads to the kind of operational problems described above. The project approach is not going to disappear, so we must learn how to adapt it to take greater account of what these writers teach us about the process of change and innovation. I believe the model has recently shown itself to be capable of adaptation, but sponsors will need to be persuaded that the adaptations proposed

are viable; that the results will still be measurable; that it will not prove more expensive; and that the impact will be greater.

Adapting the model

Let us therefore consider some of the strategies that might be adopted in order to make the project approach more effective and more appropriate to ELT projects:

- (i) **Project goals:** the only thing that we know to be constant is change and, in the modern world, rapid change. The ultimate goal of any ELT project must be to transform the people and the institutions involved so that they are able to adapt and to diffuse not just the immediate innovation but also innovations that have not yet even been dreamt of. We should not lock ourselves into the evaluation of products and structures but should focus on measuring the impact of the project on the *people* involved, with *all* stakeholders being considered. This will mean revising both our thinking on design, implementation and evaluation strategies and our very narrow view of sustainability.
- (ii) **Empowering insiders:** if Fullan (1991) has a message for us, it is that we should seek to transfer power and responsibility for the conduct of a project as quickly and as fully as possible to the "insiders". Who is included or excluded by the term *insider* varies from project to project and can vary from stage to stage within a project. Nevertheless, the empowerment of insiders must be the top priority of every project. This means:
 - identifying project personnel as early as possible and bringing them in to the project at the "basement" stage;
 - ensuring that the insiders are informed of their impending selection for the project team and of what this might mean for them;
 - being much more open with project personnel concerning the different interests of the various funding and supporting agencies;
 - providing training in the project approach; and
 - giving insiders the central role in the creation of project documents, such as the baseline study, project development plans, implementation plans and impact studies.
- (iii) **Baseline studies:** projects should not be launched without a thorough investigation of the context, resulting in the publication of a baseline study.

Such a study will not only enable the project to be context-sensitive, but will also make it possible to superimpose the context on the new ideas rather than the ideas on the context.

Weir & Roberts (1994) have provided an excellent checklist of the data that should be collected during a baseline study and of the different methods and techniques that can be used. Holliday (1994) has suggested, especially in the case of projects involving expatriate advisers, using an ethnographic approach to get at the essential but rather delicate information required concerning, for example, teachers' priorities, values and attitudes. The same method might also be used for investigating the attitudes of administrators whose support, as many a project has found to its cost, is always crucial.

The baseline study *must* be conducted by insiders. We have been following this insider approach to baseline studies in the various projects with which we at Lancaster University have been involved over the past three years and have found it to be very effective. It allows the implementers to work out their own meanings; to identify and assess the stakeholders; to assess the problems and posit solutions; to identify Stoller's (1994) "zone of innovation"; to bond as a project team; to decide who on the team is best suited to carrying out the various tasks involved; to decide what the training needs will be not only for themselves but for all the stakeholders concerned; to gain credibility with stakeholders; to develop a communications network with stakeholders; to create a sense of ownership; and it provides the team with a basis for formative evaluation and for an impact study.

The end product of the study should be a *published* document which includes the initial development and implementation plans and a statement of the project team members' responsibilities. It is difficult to generalize about how long should be spent on the baseline study, but in my experience taking the first three months of a project scheduled for three years is sufficient and is acceptable to sponsors.

- (iv) **A process approach to project planning:** if projects are unpredictable then we need a planning process which not only allows for change and variation but *anticipates* it. Evolutionary planning by insiders is the key. In my experience, involving individuals in an evolutionary planning process and allowing them to take responsibility for carrying out the plan is the most effective way of achieving transformation of the individual into a change agent. Interestingly, ODA now seems to accept that this process approach to project implementation is perhaps more suitable to ELT projects than the rigidities of the original "blueprint" approach.

- (v) **Impact studies:** many of the Language Centres set up by projects 20 years ago in universities around the world offering state-of-the-art teaching and materials have not changed since, despite the fact that the needs of the institutions they are supposed to service have clearly done so. These projects, though many were lauded at the time, failed to establish a permanent process of renewal. If the goal of a project is to change the culture of an institution so that development becomes a permanent process, then we need to change the range and nature of our evaluation procedures.

Perhaps, since *evaluation* is always such an emotive and confusing term, we should begin thinking more in terms of *impact*. Impact studies should bear a close relationship to the baseline study because many of the factors that need to be investigated will be the same, and the methods and techniques used will also be similar. What we are really looking for is evidence as to whether or not there has been a change in the situation described in the baseline study regarding the capability of the institution and the individuals concerned to renew themselves. We want to see and measure the impact at a number of different levels: the individual, the classroom, the institution and, where relevant, the country.

An impact study is a more comprehensive undertaking than an evaluation and encourages the collection of more qualitative data. It also acknowledges the fact that the impact of any project is invariably wider-reaching than had originally been foreseen. Given that the change process is unpredictable, "side-effects" are inevitable. Celani (1994) reports that, in a large Brazilian ESP project, some of these unplanned effects turned out 10 years later to be of at least as much importance as the achievement of the original objectives; as an example, he cites the impact of new methodology for teaching English on the specialist subject teachers.

This raises a further question about impact studies: when should they be conducted? In the Brazilian project it took almost 10 years for the major impact to be felt. In contrast, ELT projects typically only have a three-year time-scale, and the sponsors will justifiably want to know whether the project has been cost-effective over that three-year term.

The only solution once again is to hand over control to the insiders, and allow them to conduct a series of investigations over a longer period of time. This will probably mean having to exclude the locally-based foreign advisers for the later stages of the study, as it is unlikely that they will still be available. However, this is entirely appropriate: an impact study should not be like

a summative evaluation, but rather should be a series of working documents with a formative focus. This assumes that the insiders need to have the interest and the resources to carry out this work beyond the date of expiry of the external funding.

Implications for training

Two ELT specialists of my acquaintance, who have been working on a teacher-training project in Nicaragua since 1993, have been keeping a project diary. The parts of it I have seen make for interesting reading. It is quite obvious that for the project to succeed, they need their up-to-date knowledge of ELT and teacher-training expertise. But it is clear too that the success of the project is also very dependent on the acquisition by the whole project team of certain types of knowledge and skills which are not typically taught on Masters degrees in Applied Linguistics. The following is a list of just the key skill and knowledge areas:

- inter-personal skills
- oral and written communication skills, including, for the foreign members of the project team, in the local language
- cross-cultural awareness
- an ability to handle project politics
- negotiation skills
- team-building skills
- administrative abilities
- an understanding of budgeting and marketing.

Project managers and advisers need to have these sorts of skills at the outset and Masters programmes should reflect this. Other project personnel should also be trained in these skills where appropriate. If the need for such training is ignored, there can be no sustainability.

Conclusion

In this paper I have set out the reasons why I believe it is necessary to empower insiders and some suggestions as to how this might be achieved. It is my opinion that the adoption of these strategies would make ELT projects and the project approach itself more effective. I also believe that their adoption might help to resolve

the problem of the gap that currently exists between the creators of innovations and those responsible for their implementation.

Through the creation of insider-generated project documents of the type described in this paper it should be possible in the future to establish a databank for research and development in the diffusion of ELT innovation. If this is to happen, then all of us involved in project implementation have a duty to the profession to ensure that information on projects is recorded and disseminated.

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Team development of ELT projects: a case study

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***Abstract:** ELT development projects are rarely designed by those who will actually implement them. Projects are generally planned by personnel of the donor agencies and ministry officials from the recipient country. One or both groups may make use of consultants. After the agreement is signed, native-speaking "experts" are usually assigned to a language-teaching institution in the recipient country. For both expatriate and local staff, this is generally their first contact with the project and its goals. Frequently, the initial months of implementation reveal problems overlooked in the planning process as project details are worked out on the ground. In the best of cases, these difficulties are overcome and the project eventually succeeds, with the only loss being project time taken to resolve the problems. In other cases, the difficulties are insurmountable.*

This paper details the successful planning process for a residential language training center in Egypt. This process brought together those people - Egyptian and expatriate - who were to head their respective teams once the project was implemented. Thus, those details which often frustrate the first months of a project (Rea 1983; Bowers 1983; Wingard 1983) could be worked out during the planning stage.

Introduction

A significant number of English Language Training (ELT) professionals are involved in the implementation of developmental language teaching projects overseas. The literature on the planning and management of such projects is a small but growing field of enquiry in ELT publications. Brumfit edited a 1983 study of eleven such projects. Jordan, also in 1983, edited a collection of studies, most of which concerned developmental projects. The *ELT Journal* has included at least three recent accounts of developmental projects (Kennedy 1987; Kouraogo 1987; Woods 1988). The International Association of Teachers of English as a Foreign Language (IATEFL) Special Interest Group on ELT Management sponsors half a dozen sessions on the topic at its annual conference, and articles on the management of development assistance projects appear regularly in the group's newsletter (IATEFL conference

programmes 1987-94; *IATEFL ELT Management SIG Newsletter* 1987-94). The *TESOL Quarterly* has not recently featured any articles on the planning and management of projects in the developing world, but did recently publish a case study of the planning and implementation of a curriculum development project in the developed world (Nunan 1989). Holliday (1994) is, to our knowledge, the first ELT *book* (as opposed to collections of articles) devoted to language teaching projects. Finally, the fact that this paper was one of 70 presented at the Second International Conference devoted entirely to the topic of Language in Development is a sign of growing interest in the field.

Frequently mentioned in the literature is the importance of planning. Many publications offer suggestions and guidance for the planning process, but none offers a systematic method for such planning. This paper, after briefly reviewing the traditional planning process for foreign aid projects in ELT, will describe one such method, the Joint Working Party; present a case study of how such a Working Party functioned in drawing up the plans for a language training center in Egypt; and, finally, offer a preliminary assessment of the contributions of Working Parties.

Traditional planning methods

Overseas aid procedures and bureaucracies differ widely from country to country, but it seems to be a common feature of most systems (and certainly of the American and British) that, in the planning stages of a developmental project, the standard procedure is for foreign aid officials of the donor country to develop the broad outlines of the project in cooperation with, or with the approval of senior officials in the relevant ministry or ministries of the recipient country. Usually those who develop these broad outlines will not be directly involved in implementing the project, but might very well oversee those parties who do implement it.

It is normal practice in American foreign aid projects that, once the broad outlines have been agreed to, a Request for Proposals specifying those outlines is prepared and agreed between the donor agency and the relevant ministry of the recipient country. Private voluntary agencies, universities, consulting groups or private companies then submit detailed proposals indicating how they would implement the proposed project: a scope of work, job descriptions of local and expatriate project personnel, procurement plans, budgets and reporting mechanisms are all spelled out in these proposals. The authors of the proposals have not been involved in the initial planning process, and they usually receive their only direct information about the project from the Request for Proposals. Few, if any, of the proposal writers

have any experience in the specific local department or agency which will be the host institution for the project; many may not have any experience in the country in question; and some may not even have experience in the field of endeavor (though it is unlikely that the latter groups would be awarded the contract).

Once the various proposals have been submitted, the donor agency and the recipient ministry evaluate them and award the grant or contract to the organization which has submitted the proposal that is judged the most practical and cost-effective. It is usually only after the contract has been awarded that representatives of the foreign organization which is to implement the project meet the local officials with whom they will be working. Quite often, this is also the first time that the local officials who will implement the project in the host institution (as opposed to high-ranking ministry officials involved in the Request for Proposals process) are familiarized with the details of the project.

British overseas aid projects are somewhat different, involving the signing of an agreement and the drawing-up of a plan which outlines the project and includes anticipated obstacles. The plan must include criteria for success, but offers a less detailed scope of work than do American projects.

The American system has the advantage of presenting a very detailed scope of work (which may or may not be completely relevant to the specific local situation), and the British system has the very definite advantage of forcing planners to concentrate on anticipated problems (Martin 1994). British projects, however, share at least one element in common with American projects: the planning process does not usually bring together those expatriate and local personnel who will actually implement the project. Holmes & Crossley (1994: 65) describe a British project in Africa, though the same description could apply equally well to American ELT aid projects: "When teacher trainers or project officers arrive in a developing country and a project is put into operation, it is customary for certain fixed roles to take over. The outsider brings new ideas and the trainees bring their problems to be solved." Broughton (1994: 18), in contrast, describes the ideal, if rarely realized situation: "...an aid project, if it is to be successful in its affective domain, must be conceived as a collaborative effort from the outset."

Because, in both the American and British cases, the expatriate and local project staff are not usually involved in the planning process and only meet once the project is ready to begin, plans that have been made often prove to be inadequate. Even if the plans themselves seem adequate on paper, personality conflicts and power struggles between the expatriate and local teams frequently manifest themselves in the initial stages of project implementation.

Bowers (1983), Frankel (1983), Grant (1983), Heaton (1983), Wilson & Harris (1983), and Wingard (1983) all describe aspects of various projects which encountered serious difficulties because planning, specifically planning involving the consultation of local staff who were to implement the projects, was inadequate.

Jordan (1983b) and Hayes (1983) offer more encouraging accounts of successful projects and attribute their success to such planning. At least in the case of Hayes, this planning was accidental (1983: 15-16): "We were lucky in Sierra Leone... We had, moreover, both the time and opportunity to plan, in that one post, the central co-ordinating post based in the Ministry of Education, was filled a year ahead of the others." She then adds: "This meant sufficient time to acquire a thoroughgoing knowledge of the Sierra Leonean educational system from the inside and the opportunity to devise detailed plans and schemes for the project using that knowledge."

The need for consultative planning

This lack of consultative planning in many projects may be considered surprising in that its importance has long been recognized. According to Rea (1983:88) "...if a project is to stand any chance of successful implementation, then the design document on which it is based should be discussed at various levels within the wider context of the institution as a whole, as well as with those at the ELT level of implementation." Bowers (1983: 114) lists eleven stages for aid projects, seven of which can be considered the planning phase; he believes that these planning steps are usually taken too hastily, "with the result that the wrong problems may be tackled, or the wrong solution attempted, or the implications of change inadequately considered, or inadequate resources made available, or interested parties antagonized", resulting in the failure or underachievement of many projects. Holliday, more recently (1994: 211-12), has called for a phase of ethnographic research to begin during the planning stages and continue throughout the life of the project.

The difficulties described in the literature above are hardly surprising; plans have been made by a donor country organization which is not familiar with the conditions in the local organization which will be its host. These plans usually modify the scope of work of the local Director, often cause local officials to be displaced, and frequently involve additions to staff or other personnel changes. Moreover, the local officials who have not been involved in the planning process may not be completely familiar with the ascribed goals of the project. Even assuming that

the plans are well-made and relevant to the local situation, it is almost inevitable that conflicts should arise when project personnel from different cultures and different bureaucracies meet only on the day that project implementation begins.

Any given project is almost certainly initiated because there is a perceived problem or gap to be filled in the recipient country, but the project also almost certainly proposes changes in procedures (and possibly personnel) in order to implement the plans and improve conditions. Members of the local staff, and especially the head of the local department, will feel insecure and fear that their authority and expertise are being challenged if, as is usually the case, they have not been involved in detailed planning for the project. The local team may not even be aware that a problem area exists in their domain, or at least they may not be willing to admit that a problem exists which they are unable to solve. The initial elation at hosting a foreign assistance team (involving the prestige and also, frequently, the equipment which often accompanies such projects) may soon dissolve and give way to bureaucratic in-fighting. The expatriate team, on the other hand, is committed to the plans it has developed - and will be evaluated on its implementation of those plans. The expatriate team, therefore, may try to push the local team into acceptance of those plans and will tend to resent any obstacles placed in the path.

Such conflicts are frequent in the initial stages of a development project. Two outcomes are possible: the conflicts will become so serious that little or no progress results from the project; or the conflicts are gradually resolved in the initial stages. As these problems are worked out, notable progress may begin at some later stage during the project and may or may not be sustained after the completion of the project (Holliday & Cooke 1982). Bowers (1983), Wilson & Harris (1983) and Drury (1983) describe four different projects which encountered significant difficulties because planning had been insufficient before the arrival of the expatriate teams; these teams, who had not been involved in the planning themselves, faced problems which had not been anticipated by the planners. Time-consuming corrections then of course had to be found in mid-project.

It is essential to find a mechanism which can eliminate, or at least diminish, the problems which frequently occur at the beginning of foreign aid projects. Rea (1983) proposes that a project design team should conduct a feasibility study and draw up the initial proposals. She believes that frequent evaluations, at each stage of the project design process, can help to reduce the problems. Other experts, however, feel that more than frequent evaluation is needed in order to ensure the success of a project. Kennedy stresses the importance of "*collaborative...decisions...taken on the basis of consensus*" (1987: 168; original emphasis), involving the local project staff and the "outsider". Kouraogo (1987: 171), describing a different type of project,

agrees, noting that: "Participation is thought to prevent resistance to innovations and to allow a smoother negotiation of the gap" between curriculum developers and classroom teachers. Woods (1988: 197), in listing twelve tips for project planners, presents as his first idea: "Involve local participants at all stages of the innovation process."

We believe that the "Working Party", described below, can provide a systematic mechanism for involving in the planning phase of a project local and expatriate staff who will be responsible for its implementation and that the "Working Party" can encourage the development of a spirit of cooperation and consensus, elements which are essential to the success of a project.

The Working Party in action: the Residential English Language Training project

Between 1985 and 1988 the Egyptian Ministry of Higher Education and the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) held periodic discussions with a view to establishing a residential English language training center. The center was, in its initial stages, to prepare Egyptian academics eligible for study abroad for the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) and to give them training in academic English and cross-cultural skills. In later stages the center could provide a venue for the training of secondary school teachers and inspectors, Egyptian professionals needing English for their work (journalists, people in the tourism industry, librarians) and academics needing to demonstrate an ability to conduct research in English before registering for postgraduate degrees.

Despite more than three years of occasional discussions and despite the hiring of outside consultants to write detailed plans, by August 1988 USAID and the Ministry had still not agreed on such basics as staffing patterns for Egyptian and expatriate teams, reporting patterns for the staff, staff training, curriculum, renovation of facilities and preparation of the site, procurement of educational resources and furnishings for the classrooms, offices and living quarters and an overall budget for the project.

Thus, in August 1988 a full-time consultant was appointed to the project, and in November 1988 a Working Party was established by the Ministry and USAID to develop plans for the project. Members were: the USAID Project Officer, senior representatives from the Ministry (including the Director of the center where the project was to be located), the full-time expatriate project consultant and a second expatriate consultant who also had other duties.

At the first meetings in December 1988 the consultant, who served as coordinator of the Working Party, began the planning process with a review of the rationale for the project, the need for such a center and how a residential center should operate. These basic elements were discussed for two reasons: first, so that it could be determined that all parties were in agreement on these essential points; and secondly, so that the Working Party members could develop the habit of working together and making agreements that were relatively easy to reach, rather than beginning with the more controversial problem areas. (Another non-controversial early decision of the Working Party was, at the beginning of 1989, to recommend the extension of the five-year "life of project", dating from 1985, so that the project would actually have time to begin.)

The Working Party quickly turned to more controversial areas:

- (i) **Renovation:** how much to spend; which parts of existing facilities needed renovating and to what extent; which existing offices and personnel would be displaced.
- (ii) **Staffing:** how the expatriate staff would fit into the local administrative pattern; how the Egyptian staff would be recruited and paid; how they would work with the expatriate staff.
- (iii) **Staff training:** what qualifications the staff would have when recruited; what types of training - local and overseas - would be needed to improve their skills.
- (iv) **Procurement:** what types of equipment were essential for instructional purposes; what furnishings were needed for offices, classrooms and living quarters; whether the procurement would be done locally or from the United States.
- (v) **Curriculum:** what items the curriculum would contain; how innovative the curriculum would be; who would design the curriculum.
- (vi) **Budgeting:** what the total budget would be; how much each side would contribute; how the budget would be allocated among the items mentioned above.

As these more controversial points were discussed, the rapid pace of agreement reached in initial meetings was no longer the case. The Working Party, however,

had established a method of working together and reaching consensus, and these problems were eventually solved.

The Working Party developed the method of discussing each area of the planning process, reaching a consensus and writing recommendations to supervisors in the Ministry and USAID. After receiving comments from those supervisors, the recommendations could be revised as necessary. As far as was possible, once specific recommendations were accepted, they were regarded as the final plans for that particular area, though further developments or changes in official regulations in Cairo or Washington meant that some accepted recommendations later had to be revised.

Reaching consensus

One specific example of reaching consensus in order to resolve an area of contention is described below (Balabanis & Martin 1990, 1991).

USAID and the Ministry were in rough agreement that approximately one million dollars would be spent, using American funds, to renovate the center (which had been in existence for 25 years as an adult education center, but was under-utilized and did not offer English courses). USAID envisioned displacing current center staff, converting offices into classrooms and monopolizing all office, classroom and living space for the English programs. USAID regulations and policy did not permit expenditure for the construction of new buildings or for the renovation of the one nearly empty building, a mosque. The Ministry envisioned retaining all current staff and programs: the center had a reputation as one of five regional literacy training centers established around the world by UNESCO; funding had later been taken over by the Arab League Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (ALESCO), and that connection was deemed vital at a time when Egypt was being readmitted to the Arab League after a 15-year absence.

Tentative plans were drawn and re-drawn and various solutions were tried. The Ministry, and even some USAID personnel, tried to convince USAID policy makers to fund a small new building. In another attempt to find additional space, the mosque was described as "the unfinished building facing the administration building" (Joint Working Party on RELT 1989) in the hopes that USAID funding could be obtained. As negotiations continued, the Director of the center periodically ceded yet one more room for the use of the English program.

At several points, one group or the other threatened to withdraw support from the project. Both sides, however, had become committed to the project and had developed the habit of reaching a consensus, so the threats were not carried out. As the various solutions mentioned above were proposed by members of the Working Party, the proposals were carried to superiors at the Ministry and USAID.

Eventually, the Egyptian government agreed to contribute funds for the construction of a small new building. The problems, however, were not solved. USAID money could be spent only for renovation of areas to be used for the English program. Egyptian funds were also earmarked for the use of the English program (so that the Egyptian funds would count as an Egyptian contribution towards the project). The project thus had twice as much money as needed for renovating and/or constructing areas for the English program and would eventually have twice as much space as needed for the program. However, there was still no space for the center's other activities. Moreover, the Egyptian funds could be used only for construction, but not for architectural fees for that construction.

At the urging of the Working Party, USAID agreed to fund the architectural studies and, in return, received the right of approval over the design of the new building and could thus be assured that its priorities in regard to number and size of classrooms would be respected.

The Working Party continued its efforts of planning for the relocation of existing personnel, room by room. Finally, the remaining problems were solved when USAID agreed to renovate certain areas for the temporary use of the English program (1-2 years) pending completion of the construction of the new building. Displaced center staff working on other projects could then return to the renovated areas as more space became available after the new, Egyptian-financed building was brought into use.

The Working Party was able to bring this difficult problem to a solution for two reasons. Firstly, the entire group had developed a strong commitment to the project and had also developed the habit of working together to resolve problems. Secondly, the group had the time - and the commitment to spend that time - to resolve problems in ways that higher-level officials on both sides could not do. The Working Party accomplished this by meeting frequently, discussing the issues, returning to the center to measure and re-measure spaces, coming to a consensus, writing position papers to the two bureaucracies and then returning to the Working Party to find alternative solutions, if needed, and again defending those solutions.

Working Parties and the planning process: the Working Party concept

In program development, good plans can be made by individuals or teams working together both formally and informally, but the problems are apt to lie in getting the plans accepted and implemented. Establishing an officially-recognized Working Party, comprising the people who will be most involved in carrying out the plans, can be an effective way both to develop good plans and to arrive at their acceptance. The very fact that a Working Party for planning has been formed shows the serious commitment of the authorities to their planning goals. Those involved will have the assurance that they are working toward plans that are real. The official status of a Working Party also gives it a number of strategic advantages. All important groups will have to be satisfied that their interests are represented. In order to avoid protests, the authorities concerned will give careful thought to the members they appoint. Individual members will have their positions strengthened by their own and others' awareness that they are designated representatives. If, for some reason, particular individuals can no longer participate in the Working Party, they will probably be replaced if their positions are official ones. The status of the Working Party will push its members to get things done, and both participants and outsiders are more apt to accept the responsibilities and deadlines imposed by the momentum of their work. Plans and recommendations emerging from an official Working Party are more likely to receive a quick response from the authorities asked to review them than those brought by individuals or informal teams, and they will be given more weight. It will be understood that the recommendations already reflect processes of compromise and consensus and are believed to be workable.

During the planning phase of projects it is most efficient for a relatively small number of individuals to work together. A Working Party should ideally be limited to approximately three to eight regular members, representing various interests concerned in the project and the various areas of expertise. Larger groups are unwieldy, although they may be able to function if all substantive work is accomplished in smaller sub-committees. A regular meeting schedule should also be established.

The Working Party should seek a broad range of information from all groups concerned, and therefore should invite outside consultants or interested individuals to attend Working Party meetings as needed. In order not to impede the development of ideas, issues should be widely and freely discussed. Nonetheless, during the time that ideas and positions are most in flux, it is necessary for a working group to hold some of the discussions of developing ideas and positions in confidence. Space must be allowed for compromise and change until a consensus can be reached.

A Working Party needs sufficient time to consider all ideas and arrive at consensus. It will need to submit its recommendations at various stages to policy makers for approval and for guidance in its endeavors. A Working Party must have administrative support to accomplish its work.

The Working Party process takes time. It requires many meetings to develop the attitude of a problem-solving team among its members, and time for all issues and viewpoints to receive a full hearing. At least some of the individual members must be prepared to devote considerable working time outside the regular meetings to follow up on plans or decisions.

The advantages of a Working Party for planning

The Working Party model affords a number of important advantages to the planning process. Some of the principal benefits are:

- (i) **Objectives are clarified until there is agreement on goals.** Different interest groups involved in any project usually have different priorities. In a bilateral negotiation process, misunderstanding and suspicion can arise because each side may underplay or even conceal some of its objectives. In a Working Party the problem-solving mode of discussion leads to compromises that are well-understood.
- (ii) **Potential problems can be anticipated and avoided.** Even with the best of intentions on all sides, it is rare that all those involved in planning can fully appreciate the other parties' viewpoints and the bureaucratic, financial or even cultural framework within which they must work. This is especially true when Working Party members come from different countries and different professional backgrounds. It is better to share information and foresee as many problems as possible in order to find solutions for them during the planning process than to discover them after project implementation has begun.
- (iii) **Commitment to program plans and objectives will be increased.** The Working Party discussions lead to a process of mutual education and trust among its members and a full understanding of all aspects of the program. For example, administrators learn the instructional priorities of educators, and educational consultants learn the realities of administration and budget. All know that their viewpoints have received full consideration. Since the

commitment of the planners to the program will be high, it is important that some of the members of the Working Party should be the individuals responsible for its successful implementation.

- (iv) **Precedents for consultation and consensus will be established.** One of the problems of educational development is that often those closest to the program and its target audience have the least policy-making authority. A Working Party sets a precedent for consulting all groups, including those with the most direct experience and expertise. Since all interest groups are represented, decisions within the Working Party must be arrived at by consensus or democratic means. This will result in habits of discussion and the soliciting of expert opinion, in contrast to autocratic fiat. Working Party members will become proficient in processes of give and take and more tolerant of differing opinions. Authorities above the Working Party will establish habits of response and, hopefully, of referral to the Working Party concerning issues that must be ruled upon. This model can provide a precedent for teamwork and possibly the continuation of appropriate advisory councils after implementation has begun.
- (v) **A Working Party can respond to policy-making authority.** It is most important for the Working Party to include members who can act in a liaison capacity to officials at a higher level. The discussions of the Working Party must often take place in a "brainstorming" or creative "problem-solving" mode. As ideas are generated by the Working Party, representative members can informally check the receptivity of authorities at a higher level before any points of discussion become hardened positions. As a result, when a group consensus is finally achieved on an issue, the *Working Party Recommendation* will probably reflect policy-making concerns. An important principle is that Working Party Recommendations should be reviewed by policy-making authorities at regular stages throughout the planning so that the Working Party can receive official as well as unofficial guidance and affirmation for its work.
- (vi) **The planning process can be fully recorded.** During any planning period, individuals marginally involved are often misled by their own false speculations and inappropriate expectations about the outcome. As the planning process continues, many of those to be affected may begin to fear that decisions are being taken without them, even though the truth may be otherwise. In order to foster a free exchange of ideas a Working Party may need at times to hold some of its discussions in confidence, but the regular keeping of minutes, the reports of consultants and Working Party members, the

preparation of recommendations, written responses and directives from authorities and, finally, the decisions and plans arrived at provide an open record of the work during the process. It is then possible to review the results of planning with full confidence that the Working Party has taken all viewpoints into consideration and has been thorough in its work. The record can also serve as a valuable source of information for future implementers of the project and ensure that the objectives of the project are fulfilled. Furthermore, future planners of other projects can draw on the record of the Working Party's experience to aid them in their planning. As Kennedy (1987: 168) points out: "This recording principle may seem a relatively trivial point, but it is an important aspect of planning and evaluation."

- (vii) **The result will be a good plan.** At the end of the process, a good Working Party will produce a good plan that is the result of long and careful deliberation based on all available sources of information and responsive to all concerns. The members of the Working Party will understand the rationale for each decision and be committed to the implementation of the plan. They will also be able to explain the plan fully to all others, as the process will make them "experts" on all its constituent parts. It is important for the policy-making authorities to respect the Working Party's work and draw on the expertise of its members, since a plan developed by such a Working Party is probably the one with the most realistic chance of success.

Conclusion

In the case studied in this paper the more traditional methods of planning a project could not have worked (and, in fact, had not worked during the first three years of planning). If any plans had been approved and if an expatriate team had arrived, the team would have encountered serious space allocation problems, as mentioned above. Other serious problems, including confused lines of authority between the expatriate and local teams, curriculum content, and budget constraints, would have meant that the early days of project implementation would have been faced with potentially insurmountable difficulties.

The Working Party process we have described is no panacea for all problems in the planning of foreign aid ELT projects. It is time-consuming. It involves the participants in the not-very-rewarding tasks of bureaucratic in-fighting. Its solutions are not necessarily ideal. It does, however, guarantee that those who will be involved in implementing the project are also involved in every detail of the planning. It

also means that many of the problems that plague the initial phases of implementation of foreign aid projects will be met and resolved instead during the planning phase.

The Working Party process should save substantial resources of time, funding and energy and may prevent the project from failing. The usual headaches involved in the floundering early stages of a new intercultural project may be replaced by a smooth channeling of effort into the active realization of its well-developed plans.

Note

In 1992, plans for the Residential English Language Training Center were put on hold due to policy changes in Washington. They were briefly revived in 1994, but, due largely to the deteriorating security situation for foreigners in Egypt, it was not felt opportune to open what had been described as "an American village" in rural Egypt. Despite the fact that the project has not been fully implemented in its original form (English courses are being conducted - with alternative funding - but all staff members are Egyptian, rather than there being a binational team), the authors feel that the lessons learned from the planning process, the commitment to the project and the willingness of all concerned to compromise and arrive at a consensus offer valuable insights into an alternative method of project planning.

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The roles of insiders and outsiders in evaluating English language programmes and projects

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Abstract: *An argument is made for an integrated approach to evaluation with both formative and summative dimensions and the cooperative involvement of both insiders and outsiders. Particular attention will be paid to potential shortcomings of outsider-driven baseline evaluation studies such as those conducted in Nepal and Guinea (see Burton et al. 1994; Weir & Burton 1994; Weir & Roberts 1994). These studies demonstrated the need for clearer insider involvement for reasons of cost, practicality, development, project sustainability, as well as for the very contribution such involvement could make to comprehensive and insightful summative evaluation.*

Involvement in self-directed formative evaluation is increasingly recognized as a form of teacher development, arguably one of the most effective forms if carried out consistently, collaboratively, and with relevant external help if and when it is needed. Recent involvement in an insider-led formative evaluation project in India and professional accountability evaluations in the UK have illustrated the clear value of active insider participation but have also raised the issue of the need for some external moderation, both for its catalytic effect and in order to enhance reliability.

Accountability versus development

A distinction is often made between evaluation for purposes of **accountability** and evaluation for purposes of programme or project **development**. These two purposes have often been assumed to be in conflict. However, in this paper I argue that it might be more productive to incorporate *both* dimensions into the evaluation of English Language Training (ELT) programmes and projects.

Accountability-oriented evaluation is commonly intended to assess the degree to which insiders have met contractual and/or professional accountability demands. It is usually *summative* in focus and is, in most cases, conducted for the benefit of an external audience or decision-maker. Such an *extrinsically-motivated* evaluation often conforms to the traditional model of bureaucratic inspection. Within this approach, what is to be inspected, how the inspection is to be undertaken, and

what action, if any, needs to be taken as a result of the inspection have conventionally been determined at the bureaucratic level outside the programme or project itself, and external to the personnel concerned with implementation (teachers, project staff and so on).

In comparison, development-oriented evaluation is intended to bring about programme or project improvement and will normally be *insider-driven*, *formative* in nature, building on what is good in a programme and improving what is not. However, this paper argues that data generated by insider-driven formative evaluation can *also* contribute to meeting both professional and contractual accountability demands. Likewise, data generated for summative purposes may also serve a formative purpose in leading to improvement in both programmes and projects.

Contractual accountability: lessons from the Nepal baseline evaluation

The Nepal baseline study was a small-scale, field-based, non-equivalent control group, pretest-posttest design contrasting the learning gains of 750 students in the grade 8 classes of 11 trained and 11 untrained teachers. The experimental treatment took the form of instruction by teachers who had attended a short training course. We were concerned to see if, with faithful implementation of the training, there would be superior learning gains in this group as evidenced by improvement in student language test scores.

As well as testing students we were able to negotiate the inclusion in the study of a brief to monitor the performance of trained (experimental) and untrained (control) teachers. In this way, we were able to establish that the treatments received by the pupils were indeed different - in other words, that our control and experimental groups were indeed exposed to different language instruction. This was felt to be particularly necessary as only limited provision had been made for any formative follow-up of teachers in the main project.

In most ELT projects to date there has been a tendency *not* to integrate the development- and accountability-oriented dimensions to evaluation, because they are carried out by different parties serving different interests. As external evaluators in Nepal (Weir & Roberts 1991, 1994), we were aware of the strong accountability orientation of the baseline study which the external funding agency had contracted us to carry out for summative purposes. During the course of the study we became equally aware of the valuable formative contribution we could have made had our terms of reference been different. Through our experience of implementing a baseline

evaluation design, and the constructive criticism from within the funding agency, the UK Government's Overseas Development Administration (ODA) (see Burton *et al.* 1994), we can draw some tentative conclusions concerning the involvement of insiders and outsiders in such studies:

- (i) **Outsider objectivity versus insider understanding:** frequently, as in the case of Nepal, outsiders are brought in on the grounds that they are disinterested and more objective than insiders and so are likely to provide a more credible evaluation report. It needs to be recognized that even outsiders come to a project or programme with their own previous experiences, perspectives and views of the world. However, unlike insiders, they have no personal investment in the successful achievement of project or programme outcomes and are therefore less likely to be biased towards particular interpretations of events (King *et al.* 1987). If local players are involved in evaluation there is always a danger of bias and personal interest. The neutrality of an outside moderator is intended to guard against this. There will perhaps always be a need for some external moderation to lend credence to the results of evaluation. Also, crucially, external moderators can address aspects of a programme or project which are affected by insiders' "blind spots" or by their often tacit agreement not to bring uncomfortable or controversial issues into the open.

However, it is unlikely that outsiders can evaluate effectively without the cooperation and collaboration of insider staff. It is doubtful whether short-stay visitors can understand the totality of an educational programme or project. It is certainly unlikely that they would be able to gather the evidence that would be required in order to do this. Insiders have far greater experience of the situation and are aware of the history behind developments. Collectively, and sometimes individually, they have considerably more insight into the workings of a programme or project than any short-stay outsider can possibly be expected to possess. In particular, they will understand the human predispositions and relationships that affect implementation. An insider can help evaluators trace developments because he/she will be involved in those developments and will have particular understandings or recollections of the reasons for decisions taken. The insider can thus provide a far more detailed understanding of developments than an outsider would gather in a short visit.

- (ii) **Resources:** collecting and processing data in a baseline design that is wholly conducted by outsiders requires considerable resources. An adequate externally-conducted baseline study would be most relevant to a large project,

where the commitment of resources it demands would not be disproportionate to the total budget. In the case of small projects with limited funding, insider staff could be responsible primarily for collecting baseline data according to an externally agreed and monitored plan or framework.

- (iii) **Sample size:** there are considerable technical requirements for a non-equivalent group baseline design to be adequate. Given the likelihood of attrition, sample sizes should be large enough at the outset to sustain the study through its length. The longer the period of the study, the larger the number of schools in the sample should be. However, if there is only a small team of outside evaluators and it takes at least a day to visit a school, then the need for a large sample size could be problematic: the longer it takes to complete a series of visits the more likely it is that the pupils in the last school visited will have had much greater exposure to English lessons than those in the first visited. The solution would be a bigger team, but this brings with it its own problems in terms of cost, standardization and training. As it stands, the Nepal sample is very small and the problem of generalizability of findings arises.
- (iv) **Monitoring implementation:** the evaluation clearly showed the need for summative findings (the test data) to be complemented by a process dimension (the observational data). Unless data have been collected relating to the actual implementation of a project or programme, summative data are unlikely to provide reasons for success or failure.

It was necessary to obtain data concerning the realities of implementation and not to be content purely with summative test data on the performance of students in trained and untrained teachers' classes. The reason for this is that an evaluation should be capable of showing a relationship between gain scores and implementation patterns. If there had been no difference between the two groups (experimental and control) in terms of the summative test data it would have been important to establish why. In such a case the observational data would have been invaluable in establishing whether there was a problem with the training and in what areas this manifested itself; in other words, it would have helped illuminate the effectiveness of the training programme. Additionally, there may well have been differences in terms of implementation but no effect on student performance. Such implementation data potentially has formative value within the programme, for subsequent programmes, and to a wider audience.

Our experience in Nepal indicated the benefits that could have resulted if we had been able to help structure an insider responsibility for collecting systematic formative data. This would have given us a wider sample of teacher informants, a clearer picture of conditions across schools, follow-up data on teachers' successes and failures in putting their training into practice and the perceived reasons for this. However, although insiders can very usefully and economically collect observational data on the faithfulness of implementation of a training programme, this would be most productive where there is a need to satisfy an outside audience. This is already recognized as a central characteristic of action research (Ebbut 1985). In these circumstances a common set of observation instruments should be developed for use by both insiders and outsiders. The initiative in identifying categories of description is best handled through a dialogue between insiders and outsiders (Day *et al.* 1987). I see this as an example of the positive effects of a proposed integration of insider and outsider evaluation perspectives.

- (v) **Sustainability:** as J.D. Brown (1989) has argued, evaluation is the crucial element for success in all stages of the life of a project. The process of active monitoring (evaluation during the implementation stage) could be of great benefit to both personnel and project in that it would maintain and develop staff awareness of goals and objectives. After the initial enthusiasm of a project launch, staff can fall into routines so that their energies go into "keeping things going", rather than reflecting on why certain things are done or to what effect. I would argue that active involvement in project monitoring and data collection could lead to a heightened awareness of the long-term purpose of projects. This awareness would provide staff with a yardstick against which to measure the value and the effect of their day-to-day activities and to consider alternative lines of action. It should enable all concerned to better reflect upon, understand and assess what they are doing, why they are doing it and how to improve upon it. Indeed, integrated evaluation activity can be seen as crucial to the development of insiders' professional competence and to the capability of local staff to sustain a project when expatriates leave. Unless insiders are involved in evaluation, and are trained to carry it out independently, there may always be a debilitating reliance on external inputs into the programme.

There is a strong argument for extending the role of the outside evaluator to include helping insiders plan evaluations and training insider staff in appropriate procedures as well as acting as a moderator to control for internal bias. This would be a more comprehensive approach, shifting the focus away from traditional inspection and summative accountability dimensions (Weir

& Roberts 1994). Additionally, one would want to expand the conventional role of insider evaluation (for strictly formative purposes) to include data collection contributing to a more broadly-based summative evaluation.

Our experience in Nepal demonstrated the need for a common framework for a better integrated evaluation involving formative and summative dimensions in projects where contractual accountability is involved. A similar conclusion was drawn from our experiences in evaluating language programmes where accountability to external bodies is valued in the interests of professional identity, status and enhancement.

Professional accountability: role conflict

Professional accountability is increasingly a motivating factor for external inspections of language programmes in the UK. The experience of evaluating such programmes and having our own programme evaluated has made us see more clearly the value of extending the role of the outsider (in this case an external inspector) to embrace developmental as well as accountability dimensions.

I will first describe the experience of my colleagues and myself as accountability-oriented, outside evaluators of language programmes and indicate the difficulties this may present when faced with insiders' expectations of help in developing their programmes. I will then contrast this with our very different viewpoint when we were insiders *on the receiving end* of a similar external evaluation. For us, this brought out a tension between evaluation for improvement which commonly characterizes insider-driven formative evaluations, and the differing priorities of evaluation for accountability, most often conducted by outsiders for reasons of quality control. It further clarified for us the need for a synthesis of the two approaches in a comprehensive, utilization-focused evaluation.

An issue which has begun to trouble us in conducting external inspections is whether the role of the inspector is to be limited to quality control or will also include a developmental function - whether only to assess the providing institution against agreed standards or also to introduce a formative dimension so that the inspector can offer suggestions as to how improvements might be brought about. In carrying out external inspections we considered our terms of reference as restricting our role to an accountability function to determine whether the school provides an adequate service for clients. Viewed in this light, there is a need for inspectors to be seen as neutral, impartial outsiders. The inspectors need to identify areas

of deficit or excellence but it would not be their job (in this view) to offer advice on how any problems might be remedied. Indeed, this might compromise their attempt at an objective stance, the application of standardized criteria.

However, we found that often the external inspection was viewed by the school as a way of receiving advice on how to improve - an expectation leading to disappointment when the inspector does not provide any advice at all. In the interests of reliability and standardization of treatment we had felt that the external inspector's primary purpose was to make an impartial decision on whether certain standards were being met, and to describe accurately what was seen, read or heard. Against this can be set the view that the external evaluator could be used in a critical role to help insiders establish for themselves the criteria and procedures for conducting evaluations and to advise where appropriate on how facets of the programme might be improved. The external evaluations discussed below do not as yet have this function as part of their terms of reference.

Most external evaluations are marred by the problem of adequate sampling (see above). In our role within the recognition scheme we came to question whether a one or two-day external evaluation once every three years, conducted solely by outsiders, is sufficient to evaluate all the significant features of an institution. Observation of teaching, particularly in large schools, takes up the biggest proportion of inspection time. However, what can be learnt by sitting in on a teacher for one or two classes is very limited.

A more useful alternative might be to encourage more internal school self-evaluation structured to take account of likely summative demands. This might, for example, involve providing assistance in the setting up of an internal system(s) of observation, with an increased role for the Director of Studies in monitoring teaching. In this broader revised scheme the external evaluator would play a moderating role when an inspection visit takes place. It would also mean that we need to explore what other documentation institutions could be asked to make available to ensure that reliable judgements can be made. More pedagogic information could be provided, such as lesson plans, schemes of work, student workbooks and records of observations conducted internally (Turney *et al.* 1982). If these extra data were made available in an accessible form then one might have more faith in the "snapshots" the external inspector can obtain. Again there would seem to be a case here for a more systematic formative contribution from insiders which could provide the external inspector with a wider data base for making judgements, as is the case with the moderation schemes for the University of Cambridge Local Examinations Syndicate/Royal Society of Arts Certificate and Diploma in Teaching English as a Foreign Language to Adults (UCLES/RSA Cert. TEFLA/ Dip. TEFLA). In these successful schemes

the appraisal of a teacher by a visiting inspector is compared with and negotiated against the fuller record kept by training staff.

Subject to inspection: inside looking out

Having described a number of issues arising from our experience of carrying out inspections, it is useful to record our differing perceptions when our own pre-sessional English for Academic Purposes (EAP) course at the Centre for Applied Language Studies (CALS) of the University of Reading was evaluated by outsiders for professional accountability purposes. What struck us was the different way in which we viewed such evaluations when we were on the receiving end as subjects; this realization clarified for us the need to try to develop an eclectic approach to evaluation which might build on the strengths of both insider and outsider contributions.

In contrast to the approach we had taken as external evaluators, as the subject of such an evaluation we were also very keen to hear from the inspectors where they thought we could improve and how they thought we might achieve this. The lack of detailed advice (not as yet within the evaluators' brief) left us in a similar position to the heads of those schools we had inspected and disappointed by not helping them to solve their own problems. A parallel can be drawn with the reaction of some of the teachers in the external evaluations we carried out in Nepal; their interest was in finding out how they might improve their performance in the classroom, while our purpose as external evaluators was to establish whether their teaching exhibited certain criterial features or not.

The first thing we noted in preparing for the external inspection was the sheer amount of time it took to gather, organize and copy documentation. However, though the process was so time-consuming, feelings of annoyance were tempered by the realization that this was very useful internally in systematizing our documentation and procedures, secure in the knowledge that it would be easier to do the next time. We were also aware that we might *never* have forced ourselves to do this without the need to satisfy the external criterion.

We also felt that collecting documentation was valuable in that it can provide evidence of internal monitoring systems (for example, of the observed effectiveness of teaching on a number of occasions) so that the restricted coverage and depth of the external evaluation may not be so serious an issue. The external inspection might in time more usefully be seen as a moderation of internal monitoring. The value of neutral outsiders would then complement the wider and fairer sampling insiders can conduct.

The external evaluation certainly had important effects on us in preparing for the inspection: it made us think very hard as an institution about what we were doing; we prepared a more thorough teaching syllabus for spoken language (which had not received the research and development focus and massive inputs of our reading and writing courses); we clarified in written documents our management structure, individual responsibilities and lines of authority (useful in what had hitherto been a fairly informal system); we gathered all documentation relating to the course in one master file; and most importantly of all, we stepped back and took a long, hard look at the *overall* programme. Internal, developmental evaluation carried out in CALS had been comparatively "bitty", tending to focus on specific problem areas such as reading-writing materials. The need to satisfy an external evaluation forced us to examine critically *all* aspects of our programme: overall management, academic management, resources, premises, social and welfare programme, as well as the more immediate teaching concerns which tend to be the usual focus of attention in internal evaluations. The experience was extremely valuable.

The positive impact of preparing for such an external inspection might be greater than any evaluator's report. This in itself may be an argument against "spot checks" and in favour of giving prior warning of a visit in order for the benefit from preparation to accrue.

In external evaluations which are conducted purely for accountability purposes there would seem to be an inevitable tension between the interests of the external evaluator and the desire for improvement on the part of those being evaluated. This tension is not likely to be resolved until a more productive, fairer integration of development and accountability purposes is achieved (Weir & Roberts 1994; Alderson & Scott 1992). A more comprehensive approach to the evaluation of ELT programmes would require a judicious blend of insider and outsider evaluation, involving a commitment on both sides to formative and summative dimensions. Such an approach (along the lines suggested in Patton 1986) should generate appropriate, credible data for the intended users through a balanced, practical, situationally responsive design planned and carried out through collaboration and consultation between insiders and outsiders.

Evaluation for development

Evaluation for development should be guided by the intrinsic concerns of insiders - by the identification of strengths which can be built upon (for example, parts of the course, materials or teaching which are working well), as well as by the

identification of obstacles to progress and the introduction of more effective means to achieve desired objectives. Cronbach (1982: ch.1) makes a strong case for the formative dimension in all evaluation studies. He sees this as making a greater contribution to education than does the mere evaluation of a finished product at the end-point of a programme or project when it is often too late to take any action. For example, in the Nepal study (Weir & Roberts 1994: ch.3) the summative evaluation revealed a number of problems with the design of the teacher-training project, but by this point the project was over. These problems could have been sorted out earlier if resources and conditions of service had allowed for *formative* monitoring through follow-up visits to trainees after the training courses. Similarly, modifying new materials in our own language programme at CALS was better carried out formatively on a week-to-week basis rather than if we had waited until the end of the course to make important changes.

Furthermore, it should be recognized that involvement in self-directed formative evaluation is a form of **teacher development**, and arguably one of the most effective forms if done consistently, collaboratively, and with relevant external help if and when it is needed. The benefits for teachers of involvement in self-directed formative evaluation are considerable, including: an enhancement of their perceptions of classroom events; developments in practice; improved professional dialogue with peers; and greater skills and confidence in exploring and presenting issues of professional concern (Linder 1991; Roberts 1993). These benefits of active and collaborative self-evaluation are probably maximized if teachers are able to participate in systematic action research into their own practice (McNiff 1988; Edge & Richards 1993; Somekh 1993). However, even where action research is perhaps inappropriate to the context or individual teacher, it still seems that there is a potential professional development spin-off in all formative evaluation activity (Easen 1985; Roberts 1993).

A bottom-up approach to evaluation: the Indian CBSE Project

The Indian Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) has undertaken a major curriculum renewal project for one stream of its English course at the secondary level, with a view to meeting future real-life communication needs. A particular feature of the project is the intensive involvement of teachers from CBSE schools in all aspects of the curriculum development. As part of this project the Central Institute of English as a Foreign Language (CIEFL) in Hyderabad has undertaken a major national-level study to evaluate the implementation of the different aspects of the curriculum with the support of the CBSE and British ODA. The study aims to collect systematic data concerning curriculum implementation through classroom

observation, questionnaires and structured interviews with teachers, students, principals and parents. An important feature of the study is that it is insider-oriented rather than being an inspection conducted by outside experts. It seeks to probe the perceptions of the different "stakeholders" in the curriculum and to involve these parties in the investigation. This active involvement on the part of the stakeholders is seen as an essential prerequisite to a continuous curriculum renewal process which will further enhance the value of the project.

Such bottom-up approaches to evaluation, while certainly enhancing the validity of a study and helping address the problem of sampling, also raise issues both of reliability and of practicality. The reliability of the data collected is a concern where such large numbers of teacher-fieldworkers are involved, and in these insider-driven studies extra attention may need to be given to providing evidence of consistency. Triangulation of data sources will obviously help, but there is also a need to consider additional measures to ensure the reliability of the data. For example, in the observation part of such studies consideration might be given to both paired and extended observation.

There are a number of other practical constraints that need to be considered. With regard to method, it is most important that formative/development-oriented evaluation plans take into account the workload upon teachers. The benefits of involvement in programme or project development must not be lost by overloading teachers with impractical evaluation tasks. The best general principle (as in the CIEFL study) is to try to incorporate formative evaluation into the normal work of the teacher (through interpretation of formal test results, consideration of students' written work, and well-focused and systematic observation of their classroom behaviour) rather than imposing *additional* evaluation tasks, such as recording classroom events or administering open-item questionnaires. It is also very important that timetables build in opportunities for collaborative development work - for instance, through regular staff meetings. There must also be concern over the sheer amount of data that are generated by the involvement of such large numbers of fieldworkers and which require considerable time to process and collate. With this constraint in mind, after the more open-ended piloting stage of such projects, consideration should be given as to whether instruments might be reduced and an attempt made to justify each item/question in terms of the use that will be made of the results.

The priorities of such formative projects are interesting to observe. The first "exploratory" stage quite rightly emphasizes participation and involvement but, for results to be credible and used as a basis for change, there is an increasing need for the canons of reliability and practicality to be addressed. The contribution of outside evaluators to such projects may well be to help "firm up" data collection

procedures to ensure that the data generated meet the criteria that will be applied to such studies in the public arena.

The value of involving insiders in evaluation and the problems encountered when outsiders attempt to conduct it themselves for strict accountability reasons suggest a compromise position is necessary between the two extremes.

A broader approach to evaluation

Our experiences in conducting evaluations in Nepal and subsequently in Guinea, India and Paraguay (Weir & Roberts 1994: chs. 3 & 5; Weir & Burton 1994) have convinced us of the need for increased systematic internal monitoring by project staff during the implementation phase, though, at crucial points, outsider monitoring would be necessary to counteract any risk of bias in the data collected by personnel who have an investment in the success of the project. This implies a broader approach to evaluation, which would involve project staff (both local and expatriate) as active participants in on-going data collection for both formative *and* summative purposes, rather than merely as suspicious objects of contractual accountability (Alderson & Scott 1992). From this perspective, "insiders" can collect information to meet external (both contractual and formal professional) accountability demands as well as for the more usual developmental purposes. Such an approach would integrate evaluation into the whole life-cycle of the project. It would encourage greater professional accountability on the part of staff to the beneficiaries of the training, to their colleagues, to the institutions where they work, and to the community.

However, the successful involvement of insider staff in evaluation does require a number of pre-conditions to be met, namely:

- conditions of service which give them the time and resources to carry out the activities;
- the devolution of genuine responsibility to monitor and modify a project;
- the readiness of more senior staff to share important information; and
- the acquisition of necessary skills by insider staff.

It would be necessary for the contracting body of the evaluation (usually the bureaucracy or funding agency) to secure early agreement on the formative and summative data that were to be collected by insiders in the programme or project team and on the role the outside evaluator would be called on to play. Issues relating to the ownership and freedom of information would also need to be clarified at the outset.

One benefit of insider involvement is that working through staff concerns can have a highly positive effect on a programme or project as it encourages active participation in identifying and collecting information which all parties recognize as useful. It makes possible a cooperative evaluation in which both client and staff concerns are addressed. Furthermore, since most changes recommended by an external evaluation study must be implemented by insiders, it is more likely that the latter will actively implement such changes if they have been party to the process that identifies them (Alderson & Scott 1992; Patton 1986). Conversely, external evaluators for accountability purposes can themselves contribute to formative studies. Most importantly, they could help formulate evaluation designs which are clearly structured to provide a positive role for insider data collection. The external evaluations discussed above did not have this function included in their terms of reference. In the coming decade it would strengthen such external evaluations if commissioning bodies were to seriously consider widening their brief to include helping institutions with the development of their own internal formative evaluation procedures.

Of course, both contributions are potentially subject to constraint (Weir & Roberts 1994), but I would suggest that a product-oriented, contractual model of accountability should not be assumed to be the only viable basis for programme and project evaluation. It is but one component - albeit a necessary component - in the more comprehensive approach to evaluation proposed in this paper; an approach that views evaluation as contributing to understanding and hence to general professional accountability and development, as well as satisfying contractual accountability requirements.

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Problematizing stakeholders: who are the holders and what are the stakes?

Hywel Coleman

Abstract: *When English Language Training (ELT) projects are at the design stage, project planners often assume that the intended recipients of project input are somehow "discrete" from the institutions of which they are members. Planners fail to take account of the fact that those who are immediately affected by training may be participants in complex and dynamic institutions (Coleman 1988). Moreover, evaluators of ELT projects tend to restrict their study of project impact to too narrow a circle of stakeholders (Coleman 1992a) and to too limited a period of time (Coleman 1992b).*

Essentially, in this paper, I wish to explore the unpredictability and complexity of the impact of educational enterprises, specifically by problematising the identification of "stakeholders". I begin by borrowing a model from the anthropological study of literacy (Street 1984) and investigating its usefulness in educational contexts. Next, I outline a framework - originally developed at the University of Leeds as a tool in project planning - and consider its appropriacy for use in measuring the impact of project activity on stakeholders. Finally, I describe a small-scale pilot study of a qualitative nature - planned on the basis of this framework - regarding the impact of a particular ELT Management training course held at Leeds for a group of university personnel from Indonesia, in the hope that this case study will illustrate the issues that I wish to raise.

Autonomy and ideology

According to Brian Street (1984), it is possible to identify "autonomous" and "ideological" attitudes to the study of literacy practices in different societies. An **autonomous** approach assumes that literacy has an identical function in every society; it takes for granted that all literate cultures employ literacy for the same purposes. There is a clear parallel, then, between *autonomy* in the anthropological study of literacy and *prescriptivism* in linguistics. Street contrasts this with ideology. An **ideological** approach is culturally embedded and recognizes the significance of the socialization process in the construction of the meaning of literacy for members of society. In other words, literacy is allowed to mean whatever the culture in which

it is found wants it to mean. Thus *ideology*, in this sense, can be seen as having parallels with a *descriptive* approach in linguistics.

The autonomy/ideology dichotomy is a fruitful one and is increasingly being borrowed by linguists, applied linguists and language educators. Examples include the following:

- Rampton's (1995a) discussion of change in research in Applied Linguistics
- Rampton's (1995b) work on linguistic "crossing" between adolescents in multiethnic communities in the UK
- Coleman's (1995a) examination of differing interpretations in newspaper discussions of the role of higher education in society in Indonesia and the UK
- Coleman's (1995b) survey of the ways in which behaviour in the English Language Training (ELT) classroom is significantly influenced by the values of the society in which the classroom is located
- Holliday's (1995) proposal to expand the role of ethnography in international English language education

The value of the autonomy/ideology distinction for us in examining the issue of stakeholders in ELT projects is that it may provide an escape from a position wherein the definition of *stakeholders* is restricted - in a narrow, prescriptive, "autonomous" way - only to those who are principally involved in project activity. If we can widen the definition of stakeholder - in an "ideological" manner - then we may find ourselves in a much better position to measure the true impact of projects. We will return to this issue below.

Parameters of impact

A few years ago, at the University of Leeds, a model was developed for predicting the impact of ELT projects (Coleman 1992a). The model was designed primarily as a tool for guiding our thinking about project design; it was therefore originally meant to be a *predictive* instrument.

I am now proposing a modified version of the model, to act as a guide in the retrospective analysis of the impact of ELT training activity. The model, represented in Figure 1, proposes six parameters to the impact of training activity : Domain, Design, Dimension, Direction, Delay, and Duration.

DOMAIN OF IMPACT	DIRECTION OF IMPACT
individual institutional national	training recipient training provider other parties
DESIGN OF IMPACT	DELAY OF IMPACT
planned unplanned	immediate impact delayed impact
DIMENSION OF IMPACT	DURATION OF IMPACT
positive (= desirable) zero (= no perceptible impact) negative (= undesirable)	short-term long-term

Figure 1: Parameters of impact of training activity

The model suggests, first of all, that training activity may have an influence on persons and collectivities at three broad levels : the *individual*, the *institutional* and the *national*. Together, these constitute the **Domains** in which impact may be experienced. Thus, for example, if a training activity is planned to bring about change in language teaching in the primary schools of a particular country, that activity is likely to have an impact not only at the national level, but also in a large number of institutions (the schools, most immediately), and also on the lives of a very large number of individuals (head teachers, teachers, pupils, parents and others). The nature and the degree of this impact may be experienced differently by different types of institution and by different individuals¹.

Design constitutes the second parameter. That is to say, training activity may have effects which are *predicted* (i.e. which are built into the design of the training activity) or *unpredicted*. These effects may be felt in some or all of the aspects of all the other parameters in the model.

The third parameter - one which is closely related to Design - is that of **Dimension**. This requires us to investigate to what extent the impact of a training activity is

positive (whether it is planned or otherwise), to what extent it is *negative*, and to what extent its impact is *imperceptible*.

The next parameter to be considered is that of **Direction**. Crudely expressed, training activities have readily recognizable *training recipients* (trainees) and *training providers* (trainers), (though, in other sorts of development projects, alternative terms will possibly be required). Increasingly, effort is expended on measuring whether the *planned* change in the trainee or recipient has been brought about. However, little attention is given to the possibility that the trainee may also experience *unplanned* change (cf. the parameter of Design above), and practically no consideration is given to the effects which training activities have on the training body and on the individuals within it². In addition to trainers and trainees, an analysis of the Direction of impact also needs to consider *other parties* that may be affected by the training or other project activity.

The fifth parameter for exploring impact is that of **Delay**. To put it at its simplest, a training activity may have an *immediate* impact; or, alternatively, its impact may not be apparent *until some time has elapsed* (even, in the case of projects, until the formal project has ceased to function). In practice, of course, the picture is likely to be much more complicated than this; some Domains are likely to experience impact much earlier in the life of a particular training activity than are other Domains. Project support staff, for example, will probably feel some sort of impact right from the beginning (increased financial opportunities, strains involved in working closely with expatriates, etc.), whereas the intended recipients (the primary school children whose reading is meant to be improved) may have to wait two or three years before there is a perceptible change.

The final parameter to be considered is that of **Duration**. In other words, does impact last for a *short time* or for a *long time*? It is this parameter which lies at the heart of attempts to ensure "sustainability" (see, for example, British Council ed. 1990, 1991, 1992).

Defining the stakeholder

When all six parameters are taken into consideration, we begin to become aware of the complexity and of the dynamic nature of impact (cf. Coleman 1988 and 1992b). (Though the model was originally designed to assist in project planning, it perhaps reveals, more than anything, the *unpredictability* of the impact of project activity.) The model also suggests that our definition of *stakeholder* needs to be extremely broad and flexible.

The difficulty of pinning down the identity of stakeholders is recognised by Case *et al.* (1985: 7, quoted in Weir & Roberts 1994: 19):

There are no easy formulas for identification of and adjudication among stakeholders. However, if there are no obvious stakeholders, it is wise to solicit concerns about the programme from as broad a base as possible.

Morrison's (1991: 71) "autonomous" definition of stakeholders as being "those people in a project whose commitment is crucial to its success" is a fairly standard one, but fails to capture the complex and dynamic characteristics of impact. Weir & Roberts (1994: 19) define stakeholders simply as "all those concerned". They also make a distinction between "key players" and "other stakeholders" (*op.cit.*: 13):

Key players submitting a proposal [refer] to other stakeholders (people who potentially have a stake in the evaluation - i.e. who it may affect to varying degrees ...)

This distinction is rather more open than Morrison's definition, but it still does not encompass all the parameters which we have identified, primarily because it appears to assume a high level of predictability in project impact.

A recent report (British Council 1995: 1) defines stakeholders as "interested and/or affected parties", a description which is very close to that offered by Weir & Roberts. Elsewhere, the same document makes a rather confusing distinction (*op.cit.*: 8) between "members of the project team", "project beneficiaries" and "project stakeholders", without explaining how we can distinguish between these categories. The report does, however, make the useful point that among project stakeholders it may be possible to identify four different levels of commitment (*op.cit.*: 3): "groups of supporters", "hostile groups", those who are "less enthusiastic" and the "silent majority".

Working from the six parameters described in our model of project impact, I would now like to propose a more rigorously defined and unambiguously "ideological" interpretation of the stakeholder :

Stakeholders include :

all those private individuals (trainers, trainees and others) upon whom a training activity may have an impact (whether delayed or immediate, whether short-term or long-term, whether planned or unplanned, whether positive or negative);

all the institutions (in training-provider, training-recipient and other contexts) - and the individuals in those institutions - upon which a training activity may have an impact (whether delayed or immediate, whether short-term or long-term, whether planned or unplanned, whether positive or negative); and

the training-providing and training-recipient nations - and the institutions and individuals in those nations - upon which a training activity may have an impact (whether delayed or immediate, whether short-term or long-term, whether planned or unplanned, whether positive or negative).

In the remaining pages of this paper I will make use of this model, retrospectively, as an instrument for measuring the impact of a training activity which has now ceased. In so doing, I will also make use of our expanded definition of the stakeholder. This application of the model constitutes a preliminary report on a small pilot study of a tailor-made course provided at the University of Leeds in response to a commission from a branch of the Government of Indonesia. Although a full-scale analysis has not yet been carried out, the case study illustrates the points that have been made regarding the need to problematise the identification of stakeholders and to extend our understanding of impact.

Case study: ELT Management training

From September - November 1992 the University of Leeds provided a tailor-made programme for 20 Indonesians in the "Training of Trainers in Management and Curriculum Design for English for Academic Purposes Courses". Almost three years have passed since the course ended, and it now seems appropriate to attempt to measure its impact.

First, some background information about the programme. It was commissioned by the Overseas Training Office (OTO) of BAPPENAS, the Indonesian Government's National Planning Board. Funding was provided under the Professional Human Resources Development Project/World Bank Loan Agreement No 3134-IND. OTO commissioned the British Council in Jakarta (and, ultimately, in Manchester and Leeds) to act as its administrative agent. The British Council thus became responsible for managing transport and accommodation arrangements and for overseeing quality control.

The 20 participants represented 15 higher education institutions from across Indonesia. Five of the institutions were classified as "core" and the remaining 10 were seen

as "periphery" universities; the distinction being that the core institutions were already providing predeparture language training services to OTO, whilst the periphery institutions were being groomed for the possibility of providing such services in the future. Fifteen participants were male and five were female; most were middle-level managers in the language centres of their respective institutions.

An important feature of the course which needs to be highlighted is that the participants spent one day a week for five weeks attached to a number of institutional language centres in the Leeds area.

Although the course itself lasted only two months, the complete cycle of pre-course planning and post-course follow-up occupied almost three years :

TIME-FRAME	ACTIVITY
Early 1991 Late 1991 Early 1992 April-September 1992	OTO undertakes initial planning First contact between University of Leeds and OTO Terms of Reference issued by OTO ³ Detailed negotiations between OTO, British Council and University of Leeds
September - November 1992	Course implementation in Leeds
February 1993	Post-course Workshop I in Jakarta, organized by OTO
March-September 1993 September 1993	Participants implement Action Plans Post-course Workshop II in Jakarta, organized by OTO
March 1994	Publication by OTO of Final Reports on Training Cycle

Figure 2: Cycle of planning, implementation and follow-up

The stakeholders

Now who - according to our new definition - can be identified as the stakeholders in this course and its associated activities? And how can the impact of the Leeds

course on these stakeholders be identified and measured? The following is a possible list of stakeholders (although the list is clearly open to further expansion), with some of the possible indicators of the impact which the course may have had upon them. This list, then, constitutes a set of hypotheses. We will examine below the available evidence for such impact.

- (i) The 20 **course participants** represent the most obvious and visible constituency. A questionnaire was designed to investigate the impact which the course had had upon them with regard to: (a) career developments since the end of the course; and (b) the participants' perceptions of changes in their own ways of working⁴.
- (ii) The 15 **Language Centre Directors** who were the participants' line-managers at the time the course was provided constitute another important group of stakeholders. They were asked by questionnaire to identify changes which had taken place in their centres since the participants returned to Indonesia, and to offer explanations for any such changes.
- (iii) Detailed baseline data was not available for all 15 **language centres**, and a thorough follow-up study in each of the institutions is not yet possible. Nevertheless, observational data from some institutions is available, and the questionnaire data provided by the participants and the Centre Directors may help to track developments which have taken place in the range of activities offered by the centres, in their internal organization, and in their status within their respective institutions.
- (iv) Since the five core institutions provide language training services to the sponsoring organization, it would be useful to know whether the **sponsor** could identify any changes in the way that these services have been provided since the end of 1992. However, there has been a radical reorganization of the management of overseas training activities within BAPPENAS, and all the managers and consultants who were most closely concerned with the commissioning of the Leeds training programme have now been relocated. There is therefore no "institutional memory" of the course.
- (v) The British Council, as the **sponsor's agent**, may be assumed to have an interest in the course, at least in so far as it was providing a paid service to the Government of Indonesia as managing agent of the training. It is not easy to establish how the impact of this involvement may be measured, however, except in the crudest financial terms (This is not to deny that the financial impact of training on the *providers* of training and on other

organizations may be very considerable; see below.) Three years after the event all the personnel in the Jakarta, Manchester and Leeds offices of the British Council who were involved have been replaced and so there is only a rather hazy "institutional memory" of the course.

- (vi) As the institution providing the training service, the **School of Education at the University of Leeds** clearly has a range of interests in the course. These include : (a) its financial impact; (b) its function as a vehicle for the recruitment of participants on to other degree-bearing programmes; and (c) the possibility of other spin-off in terms of the strengthening of its reputation in Indonesia.
- (vii) The **teaching (and administrative) staff at Leeds** who were involved in the course may be assumed to have experienced some impact by virtue of their involvement in a completely new, tailor-made training programme. Again, a questionnaire was administered to identify perceived gain - both individual and institutional - from involvement in the course.
- (viii) The **Course Coordinator** (the present author) can be assumed to have experienced some of the same sorts of impact as his colleagues (in the previous category). In addition, however, other potential forms of impact can be hypothesized: (a) a raised profile within his own institution; (b) personal gain, in terms of professional development, from having run the course; (c) increased links with universities in Indonesia; (d) an increased understanding of English for Academic Purposes (EAP) in Indonesia; and (e) a new network of professional contacts with the individual participants.
- (ix) **UK language centres**: the language centres in other institutions in which course participants carried out their attachments have been consulted, again through a questionnaire, in order to consider in what ways the experience of hosting the attachments is perceived to have had an impact upon them. I had no clear hypothesis regarding the ways in which impact may have been felt by these institutions.
- (x) **Other organizations in the Leeds area** - such as the two hotels where the participants stayed for two months - can be assumed to have benefited from the presence of the course participants for eight weeks.

What I am proposing, then, is something very different from a traditional *evaluation* of a training programme in relation to the extent to which it has satisfied its Terms of Reference (or some other relatively narrow set of criteria). Instead, what I am

calling for here is an ethnographic study of the *impact* of an event, in the widest possible sense. In embarking on such an undertaking, we may find that we are entering into some rather sensitive areas.

Findings

Ten categories of potential stakeholder have been identified. The pilot study has used questionnaires addressed directly to individuals in four of these categories, and other forms of data - documents, anecdotal reports, observations - are available. However, no detailed analysis has yet been carried out and the following comments represent simply an interim report on some highlights of the findings.

Course participants: it is known that at least four of the 20 participants have undergone further training outside Indonesia since completing the Leeds programme: one is working towards a PhD in Australia and two have completed Masters degrees at universities in the UK (not Leeds). It is not clear to what extent participation in the Leeds course helped to prepare them for these further training experiences and/or increased their strength as candidates for admission to these programmes. (One participant has also undergone long-term training in Germany in rural development, and so presumably has left ELT as a profession altogether.)

In terms of career development, one participant has become the Director of a nationally important language centre; one has become the Deputy Director of another nationally known language centre; and one has established a new language centre in her institution. There is anecdotal evidence that each of these appointments was to some extent influenced by the individuals' involvement in the ELT Management course. Six responses to the questionnaire for participants were returned (30%). Among the respondents, one has become the Head of a faculty-level language laboratory (and attributes this development to "a nice coincidence"); one has become the Academic Manager of his language centre (because the language centre "has developed rapidly"); one has continued to hold the position of Deputy Head/Secretary of his language centre; and one resigned as Deputy Head in the (unrealized) expectation that he was to be sent abroad for doctoral studies.

In attempting to establish the extent to which participants' ways of working have changed since returning from Leeds at the end of 1992, we need to bear in mind the warning offered by Maxey and Preston (1994: 1):

There is much doubt about the extent of skill transfer when students return home. In some cases people at home are seen to copy the mannerisms of those

who return. Others reject what is seen as arrogance and disdain. Enthusiastic graduates trying to pass on formal knowledge may be rebuffed by friends and colleagues afraid of their own inadequacies.

When asked directly whether their mode of working had changed, questionnaire respondents gave the following responses :

"The course I took at Leeds Univ. in the curriculum development and ELT management course has led me to be more efficient in working and more selective in developing materials needed for my own teaching programmes and for others."

"More efficient in managing ELT programs and centres. I guess I learnt something from the ELT management course in Leeds."

"After I came back from Leeds I tried to apply what I got in the EAP management course, especially a new system of evaluation."

One respondent observed :

"Almost every course participant underrated the course on financing. But I now find it informative in relation to my work as head of a language laboratory."

This is a clear example of the way in which Delay of impact may be experienced.

One participant claimed that his way of working had become more rigorous because the university as a whole had tightened up its regulations, and two others said that their way of working had changed inevitably in line with their increased responsibilities. They made no connection between these changes and their experience at Leeds.

This pilot study has not attempted any investigation of the impact which involvement in the course had on the participants' private lives, although it undoubtedly presented some of them with the difficulties which are inevitable when people are separated from their families for two months. Participation presumably also presented some of the participants with personal opportunities which they would not otherwise have had. And in every case participation probably had an impact - either positive or negative - on the individual's private finances.

Language Centre Directors: it has not been easy tapping into the perceptions of the 15 line-managers of the course participants. Three questionnaire responses were

received (20%), but for the most part the responses were polite and not very revealing. In at least one case, however, there is evidence that an individual's selection for participation in the course aroused resentment: one Director wrote:

"When I received the invitation to study in Leeds ... I really wanted to go myself, but unfortunately I was not eligible ... When I assigned X to study in Leeds, I really expected that upon returning to Y University, he would come up with suggestions for changes for improvements, but when I appointed him as course coordinator, he more often refused than accepted the task. ... Perhaps his refusal is due to lack of self-confidence."

Tensions between colleagues and between line-managers and subordinates surrounding opportunities to study abroad are not at all uncommon, but it is only relatively rarely that we find explicit documented evidence such as this.

Language centres: as noted earlier, no detailed study of changes in the 15 centres has been carried out. On the other hand, it is clear that at least one new university language centre now exists and it is directed by one of the course participants. It is also clear that some of the centres are extremely vibrant and dynamic, whilst on the other hand nothing very much appears to have changed in one or two institutions. A detailed ethnographic investigation would be needed in order to establish why the various institutions have developed in such strikingly different ways.

Sponsor: it is not possible to make any comments at all on the nature or extent of the impact which the Leeds course may have had on the sponsoring organization, since, as observed above, there is no longer any institutional memory of the event.

Sponsor's agent: similarly, it is difficult to comment on the impact of the activity on the British Council, the sponsor's agent, except that one might hazard a guess that some financial benefit was experienced by the organization. To investigate impact more thoroughly, one would at the very least need to make contact with individuals who have now moved on to new posts in other parts of the world.

The School of Education: discussion of the impact of a specific training activity on the training provider is bound to be sensitive. Three possible types of impact have been identified above: (a) the financial impact of the course; (b) its influence on the recruitment of participants on to other degree-bearing programmes within the University of Leeds; and (c) the strengthening of the University's reputation in Indonesia. Not being privy to the finances of the institution by which I am employed, I am unable to say anything about the first of these points. With regard

to the second, disappointingly none of the course participants has yet come to Leeds for longer-term study - although some of their colleagues have done so. The third area in which impact was predicted is the most intangible and yet it is here - the institution's profile in Indonesia - where the greatest impact was probably experienced.

Ten questionnaires were distributed to the academic and senior administrative staff in the School of Education who had had the greatest contact with the Indonesian group; six responses were received (60%). On the question of *institutional gain*, respondents identified a range of benefits that may be categorized under three headings - professional development, links with Indonesia, and what might be called "institutional survival".

Teaching staff at Leeds: in response to a question regarding *personal gain* from their involvement in the course and contact with the participants, five of the six respondents claimed that they had gained nothing. Only one was more positive:

"I gained a lot from the experience of thinking through and clarifying many issues of which I was aware but had not had the opportunity to examine closely."

Course Coordinator: the potential impact of the training activity on the Course Coordinator has already been identified above. Any more detailed discussion becomes autobiographical and is beyond the scope of this paper.

UK language centres: four questionnaires were distributed to the language centres in other institutions to which course participants had been attached, and three responses were received (75%). One respondent remarked that:

"the course in question took place so long ago that the staff who were most directly connected with it no longer work here ... Nevertheless what dim memories remain are of a successful course."

Another respondent, however, claimed that, although "nothing tangible" had been gained by the institution, she as an individual had acquired

"... an awareness of issues of importance to them, and some insights into our own shortcomings, strengths, weaknesses ..."

The third respondent held a similar opinion. The attachments had been "too short ... for any lasting value" for the host institution, but the respondent had gained personally since it was

"interesting to learn about the function of ELT within their system⁵."

Other organizations: no attempt has yet been made to measure the impact of the presence of the course participants on commercial organizations in the Leeds area. However, we may bear in mind the findings of Greenaway & Tuck (1995) that the overall economic contribution of international students in the UK is even greater *outside* educational institutions than it is *within* them: in 1992-1993, £310 million was received in institutional fees and almost £406 million in other expenditure. The "most vivid memories" of two of the six course participant questionnaire respondents may be relevant here:

"Contentment when browsing in the university library and in the bookshops."

"Nice shopping atmosphere in Leeds."

Greenaway & Tuck (*op.cit.*: 29) also highlight what they call the "inter-temporal impact" of international students on the UK economy:

The presence of international students *in situ* ... helps create a stock of goodwill towards "UK plc" and helps stimulate future demand for UK goods and services.

Measuring impact thus becomes even more difficult.

This preliminary study has produced some mixed findings. It has been easier to identify the nature of impact in some Domains and in some Directions (individuals in training-recipient and training-provider institutions, for instance). It has been less easy to find evidence of impact on other stakeholders (such as sponsors and their agents), although impact of some sort undoubtedly did occur. Nevertheless, it is clear that even in a relatively straightforward case like the present one - where a UK institution provides a tailor-made short course for a highly homogeneous group of participants - a large number of potential stakeholders can very quickly be identified.

Conclusions

In this paper I have tried to suggest that an "autonomous" approach to training impact is one which restricts itself primarily to predetermined Terms of Reference

or similar criteria, and so is concerned only with the way in which the training affects the efficiency of the course participants and, perhaps, their institutions. Such an approach is essentially *evaluative* and, probably, *prescriptive*. An "ideological" approach, on the other hand, must take a broader - indeed, an unlimited - view of the scope of impact. It needs to be *anthropological* and *descriptive*. It must, therefore, be fired by a simple desire to understand the very complicated and unpredictable ways in which human activities have repercussions far beyond their intended impact.

This paper has provided only a preliminary sketch of what an "ideologically" inspired study might look like, and it is too early to say what a more detailed study might reveal. However, we can probably surmise that - as in most educational enterprises, and particularly so in those involving cross-institutional and cross-cultural contact - impact will turn out to be complicated, multi-directional and surprising. And if this is, in fact, the case, then *evaluation* becomes extremely difficult: which stakes will we look at and which holders will we consider?

Notes

1. Incidentally, consideration of the nature of impact on individuals reveals an urgent need for an *anthropology of counterparting* which would attempt to answer the following questions: What sort of people in the host institution tend to become counterparts to expatriate advisors? Why do these people choose to become counterparts - or why are they obliged to do it? Are they already in some way "marked"? Does becoming a counterpart have an impact on status within the institution? Is it sometimes a mechanism for host institutions to keep awkward individuals busy and preoccupied? What short-term and long-term effects does it have on individuals' career development? Is it sometimes an obstacle to progress within the system of which the individual is part? Is an effective counterpart in danger of having his or her national loyalty put in question? Does counterparting arouse resentment among colleagues?
2. For an example of the way in which evaluation of impact on training institutions and on the wider context in which they are situated may be carried out, however, see the recent analysis by Greenaway & Tuck (1995) of the economic and non-economic benefits of international students in British higher education.
3. For the record, the Terms of Reference for the training activity, as issued by OTO, were:

... to strengthen the professional skills of ELT personnel in the areas of programme management, administration and curriculum development, so that they will be able to analyse existing EAP programmes and to design and manage new and improved EAP programmes at the ELT centres.

4. For reasons of economy of space, the questionnaires referred to in points (i), (ii), (vii) and (ix) have not been reproduced here. However, copies are available on request from the author at the School of Education, University of Leeds, Leeds LS2 9JT, UK.
5. In fact the UK centre represented by the last of these respondents had used each of the attachment visits as a heavy promotional opportunity - at first to the participants' amusement, though later to their irritation.

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Quadrant II

LANGUAGE PROJECTS AND SUSTAINABILITY

Power and sustainability in language-related development projects

Harvey Smith

***Abstract:** Sustainability has largely been seen as depending on the development of durable systems, budgets and staff. This paper proposes a further element: power. Sustainability will not be achieved if the staff do not have, or refuse to accept, the power to do what is necessary. The power which expatriate project staff - as foreign advisers - are often granted (or assume) may be denied the counterparts who replace them, or there may be cultural, political, linguistic or economic reasons why staff refuse to accept such power. Projects may therefore need to address not only the development of a sustainable infrastructure and the provision of "technical" training, but also the means of empowering the staff who will need to make the important decisions during and after the project. These may be teachers, school directors, ministry staff or others and may or may not be direct beneficiaries of the project. With reference to the Cambodian Secondary English Teaching Project and other projects, the paper looks at criteria for sustainability and the need for projects to consider how not only structures and staff but also power might be effectively transferred.*

Project sustainability

First, a caveat:

At the outset we need to remind ourselves that development is a process of change. The consequences of change will always be open to controversy since judgement of both ends and means involves values that will differ as a result of ideology, culture and the aspirations and responsibilities of those who express them. Changes in social systems, in which educational provision is embedded, are not wholly rational or predictable, as those involved know only too well.

(Lewin 1991: 13)

For the purposes of this paper, *sustainability* in aid-funded projects means the ability to continue the impact intended for the project after the aid funding has ceased.

There seem to be two principal approaches to sustainability: one expressed in terms of what the recipient, host institution or partner (whichever term is currently politically correct) should have in place by the end of the project - a product approach; and one in terms of how the project should be conducted - a process approach. While not taking issue with either of these approaches, both of which highlight factors essential to sustainability, this paper suggests that such factors are necessary but not sufficient.

Project management distinguishes between three degrees of manageability, seen as concentric circles dividing what the project can control, what the project can merely influence, and the wider project environment which the project can neither control nor influence. The outermost circle encompasses natural phenomena, such as the earthquake which destroys the teacher training college the project has helped establish, and man-made phenomena such as coups and wars, which may have the same result. The innermost circle encompasses the human, physical and financial resources over which the project has direct control. This paper is more concerned with the middle circle: in particular, how sustainability may depend on the behaviour of the recipient organisation and the extent to which this may be influenced by the project.

Approaches to sustainability

In the "product" approach, sustainability of aid projects can be seen as depending primarily on the development of durable systems, budgets and staff. To be sustainable, a curriculum development project, for example, would need to have established an appropriate structure in the ministry, such as a working Curriculum Development Centre, or a system for perpetual curriculum review and reform; would need to have an adequate recurrent budget confirmed in the ministry's national education budget; and would need to have trained enough staff to the right level of competence to undertake the work required. Where there is equipment involved, again there would need to be systems in place for its proper use and maintenance; a maintenance budget and perhaps guaranteed access to foreign exchange to purchase spare parts; and staff trained to use and maintain it. Such an approach is to some extent reflected in the terms used in the last decade: *institutional development*, establishing the structures and systems; and *human resource development*, the transfer of skills.

Others have seen sustainability more in terms of the "how" than the "what". In this "process" approach, sustainability is seen as being achieved by building on what already exists, by using local people's superior knowledge of their own

environment, by not imposing solutions, by being flexible and accommodating change, by developing awareness and motivation, by ensuring that the right politicians are involved in the right way, by encouraging ownership and so on. Looked at in this way, to be sustainable a curriculum development project would need to build on something which already exists - perhaps an existing curriculum for a different subject or at a different level of the school system - and not create an entirely new structure or systems; it would exploit local teachers' knowledge of what really goes on in local schools; it would not seek to impose a new curriculum from outside or an alien approach to curriculum writing; it would adapt to changes as it went along; it would find means to motivate staff by, for example, providing the opportunity for them to exploit whatever new skills they learn in other ways; and it would ensure that the Director General or permanent secretary were involved from the start and that local staff felt ownership, and so on. Woods (1988), Ainscough (1994) and Stephenson (1994) give specific examples of how this approach is applied to English Language Training (ELT) projects.

The two approaches are certainly not mutually exclusive. Motivated staff can achieve little if they have no budget. Structures, however expertly constructed, will not work if they are alien to the socio-cultural environment (as acknowledged, in spite of the criticism levelled against it, by the World Bank in a review of sustainability - World Bank 1985: 18-19).

In the case of the "product" approach, perhaps because one is conscious of donor accountability to creditors or taxpayers, however much the recipient has welcomed or even initiated the project there is a hint of imposition by the donor: in order for the project to succeed the recipient will adopt new structures or systems which do not already exist (or exist only on paper), will find money for a recurrent budget line which may not yet exist, and will use staff in a way they may not previously have been used. The second, more humanistic approach to sustainability, while still donor-driven, gets closer to the ways of the recipient and considers what structures and skills may be most appropriately developed for the local environment. These skills and structures should, of course, match, so that the project is developing the right skills for the structures it is developing, or vice versa. However, establishing these skills and structures may not result in sustainability if the staff do not have - or refuse to accept - the *power* to exploit whatever skills and structures the project has provided.

In the case of donor-funded projects in the field of language teaching, we rely particularly strongly on transfer of skills from foreign experts to local staff. In spite of wide geographical experience, I cannot claim a wide variety of roles in development projects. For example, I have never been a "local counterpart", never

had to sustain project impact after the aid has been withdrawn, never worked for US\$ 25 per month. While acknowledging that this is a one-sided point of view, I would like to look at one aspect of the foreign expert/local counterpart relationship more closely.

The foreign expert and the local counterpart

In many projects foreign experts are given a remarkable status within a ministry or other institution (Haverlock & Huberman 1977 state the general case; Murni & Spencer 1993 offer an application to Southeast Asia). For example, the expert may:

- have easy access to the Minister or permanent secretary;
- be able to enter into direct debate with a senior officer of the ministry, even the Minister, and contradict (or tease) senior staff without offence being taken;
- be invited to contribute to a range of meetings and other activities;
- jump the queue or take shortcuts in the normal bureaucratic sequence of events;
- be able to travel round the country at will;
- be able to make visits to other institutions without prior permission; and
- have ready access to an agreed budget for transport, workshops, seminars, etc.

The above have little to do with the expert's expertise, but are privileges - if that is the right word - granted to (or assumed by) the foreign guest. This is what Fry and Thurber (1989: 19) called: "the tendency to equate expertise with status superiority. It is easy to assume falsely that expertise is the basis for status in all societies."

In nearly two decades of work in developing countries, most of which were spent as adviser in a ministry of education or as head of an education project, I have enjoyed - and no doubt grossly abused - many of these privileges. I have also been, at the same time, responsible for training counterparts or other colleagues to take over my responsibilities. While I am confident that I and institutions chosen for overseas training were reasonably successful in developing the professional skills of the selected local staff, I have become increasingly conscious that skills do not in themselves empower.

An example from some years ago, when I was Adviser in English for Specific Purposes (ESP) to the Ministry of Higher Education in Sri Lanka. My brief included establishing an ESP Unit in the Ministry to oversee the development of ESP in technical education throughout Sri Lanka, and training three local colleagues to staff the Unit. Towards the end of my time there I became increasingly aware that, however competent the Head of the ESP Unit might be - and he was very competent - he would not be able to:

- take problems up to the level of permanent secretary when necessary;
- get away with disagreeing publicly with the Director of Technical Education, his immediate boss;
- be confident that he would be invited to all the meetings at which ESP or other issues affecting the ESP Unit might be discussed;
- visit technical colleges without first jumping through considerable bureaucratic hoops; or
- have automatic access to the Ministry budget which had been agreed for seminars, workshops, etc.

The situation in Cambodia

The bureaucratic way of life in Cambodia is similar, although not identical. Some observations from an outsider:

- (i) As a general rule, at meetings the most senior person speaks and the others say nothing unless directly called upon to contribute, in which case they generally confirm that the senior person knows best. Politeness or deference is more important than facts. (Needless to say, this is particularly important for women.) The hierarchy is fairly rigid, there is a reluctance to assume responsibility, and what to outsiders may seem very trivial matters are often passed up to the highest level for a decision. (This is, of course, not peculiar to Cambodia.)
- (ii) The Government is a coalition of the royalist FUNCINPEC Party and the left-wing Cambodian People's Party (CPP). Before the 1993 elections the CPP was the single party in the then State of Cambodia and civil servants were assumed to be loyal to the party. Since the elections many of the new entrants into the bureaucracy from FUNCINPEC are returned expatriate Khmers - especially from Australia, France and the USA - who have become partly "westernised". Not surprisingly, there has been a certain amount of

closing of ranks by some civil servants (traditionally conservative anywhere in the world), a push to maintain the status quo and to keep out new approaches.

- (iii) Given Cambodia's background and the fact that the big aid players have only just started to make their appearance, foreigners will play an important role in the development of Cambodia for many years to come - particularly in education. Meetings involving foreigners may be held in Khmer, English or French or a mixture. As Khmer does not have agreed words for a number of concepts, English or French words may be used instead. To those who do not speak English or French this may be intimidating, and their interests or concerns may consequently be overlooked.
- (iv) Civil service salaries are currently about US\$ 25 per month, about one-eighth of what a family in Phnom Penh needs to survive. However competent they may be technically, the primary concern for many civil servants is to do the minimum and get off to their second job. This has a number of observable effects: time appears less important and there appears to be less concept of how long something may take; work has a low status and there is little sense of professionalism; and because of staff absences it is difficult to achieve teamwork and build a sense of professional community.

The Cambodian Secondary English Teaching (CAMSET) Project, funded by the British Overseas Development Administration (ODA) has a number of components including curriculum development, teacher training, trainer and supervisor training, and resources development. Given very low starting levels in English and in language teaching ability, our initial major effort has been to develop these abilities - in other words, our first concentration was on transfer of technical skills. As we moved from the initial teacher-training phase into trainer and supervisor training we have become aware of the need for our trainees to develop managerial and administrative skills: these include communication, leadership and time management skills, and a sense of professional responsibility and accountability. However, it has become clear that it is more than just management skills that are needed to provide our trainees with the influence we feel they should have within the system.

The proposals and conclusions which follow are of necessity considerably more tentative than the foregoing.

Obstacles to empowerment and possible approaches to overcome them

I am suggesting that, however successful we are in providing the staff we are training with technical and managerial or administrative skills, they will not make the impact we would originally have envisaged if they do not have - or have but refuse to use - the power to make and carry out decisions. In line with the above observations, the obstacles to empowerment appear to be of four types:

- (i) **Cultural:** ministry administrators, school directors and provincial directors of education have little or no understanding of English teaching - English was not taught in Cambodia between 1975 and 1990 - and teacher-trainers, supervisors and curriculum developers will have to push hard to bring about any changes. This will be difficult where culturally one defers to and is not assertive towards someone higher in the hierarchy. Even when one has the power, there may be a reluctance to use it because of fear of the possible consequences. Others have noted the "cultural nature of management" (ODA 1991: 2) and the "differing cultural concepts as to the appropriate roles for professionals employed in the public sector" (Leach 1991: 169).
- (ii) **Political:** political constraints may dictate for local staff what one can say and to whom, whom one may meet outside work (which may be where many of the important decisions are made), and how much real influence one has: however well the foreign adviser knows the country, s/he may never be fully aware of the extent of this constraint.
- (iii) **Linguistic:** even though our project is improving the English of a number of staff, given the very low starting level many will still find meetings held entirely in English or in a mixture of English and Khmer daunting. Some senior ministry staff are reluctant to get involved too closely with the CAMSET Project because they do not speak English.
- (iv) **Economic:** as long as the economic situation of civil servants means that obtaining a second or third income takes priority over one's ministry duties, achieving the impact intended by the project will take second place.

The power which expatriate project staff have - access to any level of the hierarchy, freedom to ignore political constraints, linguistic confidence and economic security - may be denied the counterparts who replace them. As these are much larger issues than can be overcome by individual projects - although a project may influence them - the solutions (if any) rest not with the donor or the project implementing agency but with the host institution. If the recipient wishes to get maximum value

from the aid, it needs to find a way to ensure that the staff who have been trained by a project or have been involved in establishing new structures are given the power to fully exploit those skills and structures. As this would require a very radical change in the way many bureaucracies are run, this proposal is probably quite unrealistic and would, of course, attract the accusation of being yet another donor-imposed solution. Although projects are set up with the express purpose of changing behaviour, when does sustainability become cultural imperialism?

If it is unrealistic to expect the recipient country to change its behaviour in this way, project designers and implementers will need to find alternative ways to influence behaviour. Among the possible approaches:

- (i) Ignore the problem. Treat it as belonging to the outer circle, part of the project environment, something which the project can neither control nor influence. If in the event the project proves to be unsustainable because local staff do not have power, regard it as an "act of God".
- (ii) Treat the situation as a "given", part of the assumptions on which the project is based. When designing the project, assume simply that local staff will have limited power but that this cannot be changed by the project.
- (iii) Build this problem into the design and target it to a certain extent. Lower expectations for early post-project impact, but focus in part on developing changes of approach within the hierarchy.
- (iv) Try overtly, publicly, to persuade the host organisation to give greater decision-making power to appropriate staff, through discussion, workshops, overseas training for senior staff.
- (v) Devote greater effort within the project to establishing a balance of ownership and delegation by senior staff of the organisation, with the aim of building up an expectation that their staff will take more responsibility.
- (vi) Devote greater effort in the project to trying to influence a broad range of people in the organization who themselves have or can be expected to gain positions of power. Work with all the other staff the project's counterparts will have to deal with after the project. For example, in the case of a project dealing with teacher-training or curriculum development, devote more effort to influencing school directors.

- (vii) Include assertiveness training as part of the programme for local staff. This, however, carries the risk of being counter-productive if staff become assertive beyond what is culturally acceptable.
- (viii) Regard the problem as one of education, something which will only change in the long term, by steadily working on changing attitudes. Treat changing attitudes as an aim of the project, without expecting concrete results in the immediate post-project period.

The points listed above are neither exhaustive nor mutually exclusive and may overlap. Although each approach clearly has its merits and demerits, a pro-active approach is more likely to contribute to sustainability than ignoring the problem.

Conclusion

This paper has suggested that there may have been too much emphasis on establishing resources and on training counterparts and not enough on ensuring that political will and administrative and cultural capacity exist. Projects may therefore need to address not only the development of a sustainable infrastructure and the provision of "technical" training, but also the means of empowering the staff who will need to make the important decisions during and after the project. In terms of staff development we are looking at three different strands:

- (i) **Technical training**, which may be provided either by project staff in the host country or by an overseas institution - although where the technical skills do not need to be too country-specific there may be advantages in doing this in an outside institution.
- (ii) **Training in "management" skills**, such as leadership, communicating, time management, office skills, organizing meetings, basic accounting skills, etc. This may be provided either by project staff in the host country or by an overseas institution; however, as there may be some variation from country to country there may be advantages in this being conducted in-country.
- (iii) **Empowerment** - providing staff with the power to exploit the technical and management skills. This needs to be provided by the host institution, although project staff may be able to - and probably should - influence how and when it is carried out.

Perhaps the donor should insist on a commitment from the recipient not only to provide structure and budget but also to ensure that staff are given the power to ensure project impact. In a review of the literature on the role of the counterpart, Fiona Leach (1993: 321) noted that the bulk of the literature does not "acknowledge the need for a thorough understanding by outsiders of the host culture into which the innovation is being introduced". This now needs to be acknowledged as an area which is sufficiently important to deserve more attention and research.

Note

This paper was written while the author was employed by CfBT Education Services on an ODA project. The views are those of the author and do not necessarily represent those of ODA or of CfBT Education Services.

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Counterpart training and sustainability: effecting an exchange of skills

Andrea Flew

Abstract: This paper is concerned with counterpart training in English language teaching projects. It explores the nature of the relationship and the qualities of interpersonal interaction across cultures, and argues that the presence of particular attributes in counterparts is essential to enable positive and productive interaction to occur. The paper proposes that effective counterparting is achieved when it is acknowledged that the relationship involves a two-way learning process and when information and expertise is shared between host country nationals and incoming advisers.

The cases are cited of two development projects in Vietnam in which the author was involved, and which featured counterpart training as part of their human resource development brief. One project focused on counterparting between teacher-trainers working with Vietnamese secondary school language teachers, while the other involved counterparting within a predeparture English language training program for scholarship awardees preparing for overseas study. The paper analyzes the role of counterparting in these projects, and concludes that for counterparting to be an effective means of achieving sustainability, a number of factors, apart from the technical expertise of project personnel, need to be addressed in the planning and implementation of the project.

Counterparting: a definition

Counterpart is a term that occurs frequently in the context of development projects. It is often interpreted to mean "incoming expatriate adviser trains recipient host national in how to ...". I reject this interpretation, which I feel promotes the view that relevant expertise is held by one party only and that training is a one-way process. It is suggestive of a potentially patronizing approach to working across cultures, failing as it does to recognize the expertise brought to the project by the local counterpart. I believe we need to broaden our understanding of counterparting if it is to be a genuine means by which projects achieve sustainability.

To create a vision of counterparting as a constructive agent for change and development we need to examine the semantics of the term. The *Concise Oxford*

Dictionary (Sykes ed. 1976: 233) gives one meaning of *counterpart* as a "person ... forming [a] natural complement to another". The focus here is on the nature of the relationship between two persons. When we view counterparting as cooperation between people, we create a construct that recognizes each person and affirms their contribution in an exchange of expertise. Counterparting thus becomes a mechanism whereby knowledge and skills are combined in order to achieve agreed goals.

Interacting across cultures

Since aid-funded projects aim to initiate change and development, there is a need for greater understanding of the role of counterparting in this process. Research by Kealey (1990) has shown that the relationship between counterparts is critical in effecting the transfer of skills and knowledge needed for change. Through his research, based on the experiences of Canadian technical advisers, Kealey analyzes the elements of working and living successfully in a different culture. He proposes a model for the effective transfer of skills and knowledge that emphasizes the contribution to the counterpart relationship of such factors as: equality of status; degree of interaction between counterparts; interest in the local culture and the country; commitment to the job; and disregard for racial or status differences.

Pederson (1993) claims that trust, harmony and respect are the values which motivate and underpin the desire for interaction between people. He proposes that separation of expectations from behaviours is essential to mediation across cultures, suggesting (*art. cit.*: 347) that: "shared expectations...provide the opportunity for joint problem solving". Although Pederson's discussion is within the context of mediating intercultural conflict, nevertheless we can learn from his research about ways to initiate positive cross-cultural interaction. He points out that mismatched expectations can lead to conflict. Expectations are often implicit; they need to be made explicit. In inter-cultural encounters we need to be aware of our expectations and be willing to discuss them with our counterparts. This will enable us to establish relationships that engender trust, harmony and respect for one another's understanding of who we are and the values and beliefs we hold according to our different cultural experiences.

As counterparts we have skills and knowledge to offer within our own field. One of the challenges we face each time we enter a new environment is to ascertain how our skills and knowledge might best be applied within the new context. When we approach counterparting as a collaborative experience, we are in a position to draw on our counterpart's knowledge and insights into the community in which

we are working. When we recognize that through working with counterparts we gain access to the community, we are, in effect, according value to the skills and knowledge our counterpart possesses. Collaboration becomes affirmation and an invitation to learning through a mutual exchange of ideas. Attitudes of flexibility and receptiveness towards ideas and experience are necessary for each counterpart. A readiness to negotiate workplans enables collaborative working relationships to succeed. Such an approach promotes positive interaction between counterparts, maximizing the training potential of each party.

Research by Cui & Awa (1992) has identified interpersonal skills as being the most important group of factors in effective job performance in a cross-cultural setting. Skills such as language ability, the ability to establish and maintain relationships and the capacity to initiate interaction are the most significant; other qualities, in order of priority, are cultural empathy, managerial ability and personality traits. It is interesting to note that the same research shows a different order of priority of these features for cross-cultural adjustment, with personality traits being the most significant, followed by interpersonal skills, social interaction, managerial ability and cultural empathy. Cross-cultural adjustment and job performance are two major variables to be considered in the selection and appraisal of staff to work inter-culturally.

It is important, therefore, that those involved in the selection of personnel for projects perceive counterparting as demanding a range of skills, abilities and personal qualities; for only then can it be an effective means of achieving project goals. While recruitment criteria for such positions frequently mention "high-level interpersonal skills", this is often only deemed a *desirable* quality, secondary to the essential criteria of technical qualifications and relevant experience. In the selection process it is technical skills and experience that are scrutinized, rather than the ability to relate successfully to people from other cultures. The principal reason for this is presumably that interpersonal skills cannot easily be assessed and quantified. However, such qualities are essential to the achievement of project aims, and an attempt should therefore be made to evaluate these skills.

Thus far, I have outlined the approach I consider imperative to the development of effective counterpart relationships. Trust and esteem are essential to generate opportunities for learning to occur. Each participant in a counterpart relationship learns through working with the other when each acknowledges the other has expertise to offer. Affirmation between counterparts is important to develop a mutually beneficial relationship that will contribute to the achievement of project objectives. The following case studies examine the consequences of putting these beliefs into practice.

The two projects discussed below were both English Language Training (ELT) projects in Vietnam. The first focused on teacher-training and the upgrading of language proficiency of secondary school teachers in Vietnam. The second was a predeparture training program preparing scholarship awardees for postgraduate studies in Australia. Each project was designed with a specific structure and role for counterpart personnel.

Counterparting in the Vietnam teacher-training project

In 1993, three teams of three ELT personnel were recruited through the Overseas Service Bureau (OSB) of Australia to conduct teacher-training workshops in Vietnam. This was the fifth summer program of workshops sponsored by the Australian Agency for International Development (AusAID) and managed by OSB. The design of the workshop series prioritized collaboration between Australian trainers and their counterparts at all stages of program implementation.

The series of workshops aimed to introduce secondary-level teachers to communicative language teaching principles and to upgrade their English language proficiency. The training day was divided into four sessions:

- *Session One:* an Australian specialist presented a demonstration lecture, using texts produced for schools in Vietnam, to illustrate communicative approaches to exploiting the texts.
- *Session Two:* each Vietnamese counterpart conducted a class, trialling some of the approaches demonstrated in Session One.
- *Session Three:* each Australian specialist, together with his/her counterpart, conducted a language class with the teacher-training course participants as students.
- *Session Four:* trainees conducted micro-teaching language classes with their colleagues as students.

Each day began with a 30-minute feedback session with all trainees, and at the end of each day a further period of 30 minutes was set aside for discussion between all counterparts.

Working in this project was a most positive experience for me, primarily due to my relationship with my counterpart. Her approach to people was an invitation to feel acknowledged as an entity of worth. This quality opened relationships of trust with everyone, which in turn allowed relationships to be built amongst participants and staff within a very short space of time. Due to the tight time-frame of the project it was important that interaction between participants and colleagues should be comfortable as quickly as possible. The counterpart with whom I worked was particularly adept at creating an environment conducive to maximizing the learning potential of the cross-cultural relationship.

This counterparting experience also provided a valuable insight into the factors that contributed to the exchange of expertise between participants at the workshops. The key is to identify the particular skills and knowledge that each person has to contribute and to establish an atmosphere in which those skills can be recognized and used to the benefit of the project. When this is achieved, the outcome will be a beneficial and enjoyable learning and teaching experience for all participants.

Counterparting in the Vietnam predeparture ELT project

The predeparture training program involved eight Australian and ten Vietnamese English language teachers working in counterpart roles. It was coordinated by an Australian who had a Vietnamese counterpart.

In this program each counterpart dyad worked across two classes, teaching four hours per day. A 30-minute period was scheduled daily for consultation between the Australian teacher and his/her counterpart(s), though the actual time spent on counterpart dialogue to plan activities and materials varied from dyad to dyad. Weekly team meetings provided opportunities for feedback amongst dyads working on classes at the same level, as well as facilitating coordination across the program as a whole.

The project entailed working collaboratively with Vietnamese English language teachers. The principal purpose of the counterpart model was to familiarize Vietnamese teachers with approaches to the teaching of intensive English for Academic Purposes courses and to work with them on using up-to-date materials for classroom and self-access use. A secondary purpose for having a counterpart was to provide the Australian teacher with a source of information and insight into the teaching and learning of English in the Vietnamese context. It was essential,

therefore, to approach the counterparting relationship with a vision of the partnership as a shared responsibility if both parties were to gain from the arrangement and if the beneficiaries - the students on the program - were to get the best course possible.

This, for me, meant discussions with the counterparts concerning expectations and the aligning of our frames of reference to achieve a viable and productive working relationship. It was important to clarify whether we, as individuals, had the same sense of purpose that was enshrined in the project design document. We needed to establish what we wanted to achieve through the counterpart relationship and what we believed we could learn from each other. When these expectations were clarified we were able to enter a relationship where the transfer of knowledge and skills could take place. Once we have acknowledged that counterparting involves mutual learning between people from different cultures we can begin to forge a relationship that encourages effective interaction.

Conclusion

Projects aim for sustainability, that is, for the impact of project activities to continue beyond the life of the project. In the case of the projects described above the principal means of promoting sustainability was counterpart training. I have argued that for counterpart training to be effective the following points need to be borne in mind in designing and implementing a project:

- (i) Counterparting is a collaborative approach to training; collaboration means shared input and shared responsibility.
- (ii) Counterparting is an opportunity to gain insight into the context in which we are working through the recognition of counterparts' skills, knowledge and experience.
- (iii) Consultation with a professional from another culture can provide valuable insights regarding the feasibility, viability and applicability of the change that we are seeking to introduce.
- (iv) Successful counterparting requires the development of a relationship that goes beyond the scope of exchanging technical expertise.

- (v) Interpersonal skills, such as the ability to create trust and initiate interaction, suspend judgement and tolerate ambiguity, are some of the qualities necessary for effective counterpart relationships.
- (vi) Interpersonal skills assessment should feature prominently in the selection of staff for appointment to counterpart training roles.

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Managing self-access in development: three perspectives

Margaretha Kafudji, Patrice M. North and Denise Finney

Abstract: This paper examines the process of developing a Self-access Resource Centre (SARC) at a university English Language Training Centre in eastern Indonesia from the perspectives of three stakeholders in the process: the Head of the recipient organization; a representative of the donor agency; and an outside consultant contracted in to provide technical assistance.

Each of these stakeholders independently completed a questionnaire that addressed issues relating to their perceptions of their roles in and their contributions to each of the four major stages in the SARC development process: initiation, implementation, evaluation and sustainability. The paper presents the stakeholders' responses, identifying perceived successes and constraints, and highlighting areas where action needs to be taken if future sustainability of the development initiative is to be achieved.

Introduction

There has recently been a rapid growth in the literature on educational innovation and, more specifically, on the management of the innovation process, often within the context of loan-assisted and grant-assisted English Language Training (ELT) projects¹. The literature seems to fall into two major areas:

- (i) analyses of aspects of particular innovations that were successful, of those that were not, and a conclusion setting out strategies that might have ensured more successful outcomes; and/or
- (ii) a focus on trying to gain an understanding of the actual *process* of innovation itself; an investigation into why it occurred, how it occurred and, most importantly, whether or not real innovation has actually taken place.

This paper belongs to this second category. It examines the process of developing a Self-access Resource Centre (SARC) at a university English Language Training Centre (ELTC) in eastern Indonesia from the perspective of three stakeholders in the process.

Background to the innovation

The goal of the Eastern Indonesia Universities Development Project (EIUDP) is to develop and strengthen the basic sciences teaching capability of targeted universities in eastern Indonesia. Recognizing the role of ELT in supporting this aim, in the first five-year phase of the Project (1988-1992) ELTCs were established at four campuses, specifically to upgrade the English language (EL) ability of university lecturers who had been nominated for postgraduate fellowships in scientific disciplines at Canadian universities. In the second phase of the Project (1993-1998), one of the objectives of the ELT program is to develop fully-functioning SARCs to support the teaching program, to provide EL self-study materials, and eventually to provide discipline-related self-study materials in English. The intention is that such materials will aid lecturers preparing for postgraduate studies, as well as the staff of other university support units - such as the library and science laboratories - who need job-related EL skills.

This paper focuses on the development of the SARC at the ELTC of one of the participating universities - Cenderawasih University (UNCEN) in Manokwari, Irian Jaya. UNCEN operates across two campuses some 800 kilometres apart; the only faculty based on the Manokwari campus is the Faculty of Agriculture (*Fakultas Pertanian* or FAPERTA).

The three stakeholders whose perceptions of the development process form the content of this paper are:

- (i) the Head of the ELTC at UNCEN Manokwari, a representative of the Indonesian recipient organization;
- (ii) the EIUDPELT Advisor, a representative of the Canadian executing agency for the Project, and, by extension, of the donor agency, the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA); and
- (iii) an ELT consultant, external to the Project, contracted from the Indonesia Australia Language Foundation (IALF) to provide technical assistance.

For the purposes of this paper, the three will be known respectively as the *beneficiary*, the *donor* and the *consultant*. In order to differentiate them from other stakeholders in the SARC development process, they will henceforth be referred to collectively as the *respondents*.

Measuring perceptions

The research instrument for this study was a questionnaire which required the three respondents to specify their roles in, contributions to and assessments of the SARC development process. An analysis of their responses helps to illustrate the processes that have been operating during the inception and implementation of the development, and also indicates the extent to which the innovation has been adopted².

Since the object of investigation is the management of an innovation, the questionnaire was divided into four categories representing the four major stages in the process. Using terms adapted from Fullan (1991), these stages have been labelled: initiation, implementation, monitoring and evaluation, and sustainability.

- (i) **Initiation:** This set of questions was designed to explore each of the respondents' understanding of the rationale behind the proposed innovation; their initial thoughts concerning its feasibility; their perception of their own role in the formulation of the SARC development plan; and their assessment of the important features of the plan. Each respondent was asked to identify whom they viewed as stakeholders in the innovation, since it was felt that this would indicate to what extent each was aware of the power structures and cultural contexts that would affect its management.
- (ii) **Implementation:** Respondents were asked to categorize the activities that had taken place to date in the implementation of the SARC development plan as contributions to: i) institutional development; ii) staff development; iii) resource development; or iv) program development. The intention was to examine whether or not a fixed order of implementation had been followed (as in Crocker's 1987 model for project management) and, if not, to consider the reasons for the order of implementation that had actually been followed. Other objectives were to investigate perceptions of the roles of other stakeholders during the implementation stage, and to look at which aspects of the plan were considered successful or unsuccessful, and why.
- (iii) **Monitoring and evaluation:** Views were elicited on which aspects of the development plan had been monitored and evaluated, and how. Again, the focus of interest was respondents' perceptions of the roles of other stakeholders in this process. It is our view that the results of monitoring and evaluation should initiate follow-up action of some kind (rather than being a mutual confirmation exercise) and it was therefore of interest to solicit opinions on what the monitoring and evaluation had accomplished.

- (iv) **Sustainability:** The final set of questions explored the issue of adoption of the innovation (see note 2). The aim was to establish what each of the three respondents thought were *necessary* conditions for adoption, or future sustainability. Related to this question were the identification of issues that were particularly problematic; views on how they were being addressed, if at all, in the five-year SARC development plan; and opinions about the level at which some of the issues needed to be addressed and by whom.

The questionnaire is reproduced in the Appendix to this paper.

The following sections of the paper summarize and discuss the respondents' perspectives on each of these stages of the development process, as revealed through their responses to the questionnaire.

Perspectives: initiation

Perspectives on **the rationale and feasibility** of the development of the SARC at UNCEN Manokwari are summarized in *Table 1*. All three respondents shared the perception that the innovation was intended primarily to overcome some of the constraints of running intensive ELT courses for lecturers and staff that had been identified in Phase I of the Project (low levels of staffing in the ELTC; difficulties in securing funding for courses; lack of release time for lecturers; lack of available facilities for learning English outside the classroom). An additional "development-oriented" perspective was put forward by the donor, who saw the innovation as an exercise in planning and management for the ELTC staff. Views about the feasibility of the innovation were mixed.

Only the beneficiary and the donor were able to comment on **how the development of SARCs became a project objective**. Interestingly, both responses identified a *process* rather than a *decision* taken by an institution or person (this might reflect the wording of the question, which asks "how" rather than "who"; however, responses could have been framed "X decided that..."). The beneficiary considered it to be the result of discussions between herself and the donor, as well as of the assessment visits made by the consultant. The donor, on the other hand, saw it as the result of the Phase II Project design and approval process, in which agreement was sought for Phase II program objectives from Indonesian and Canadian stakeholders at a number of institutional and governmental levels.

PERSPECTIVE	RATIONALE	FEASIBILITY
Beneficiary	Need for lecturers who wanted to continue studies abroad to improve EL and self-study skills	"Convinced with idea, positive and excited" and saw usefulness to the campus community. Admitted to not having given a great deal of thought to feasibility and the difficulty of the work for ELTC staff
Donor	An exercise in the planning, implementation and management of a new service. Would raise the awareness of ELTC staff of the range and complexity of the tasks involved	Subscribed to logic of the "external rationale" but concerned about: (i) potential demands that would be made on the time, energy and creativity of ELTC staff; (ii) provision of an adequate institutional support framework; and (iii) degree of "cultural" adaptation that would be required on the part of both lecturers and teachers for an autonomous mode of learning to gain acceptance and adoption
Consultant	Similar perspective to beneficiary: learner-training for autonomy. A flexible resource which could support the teaching-learning process or function as an independent learning centre	Similar perspective to donor
Shared	Consensus and awareness of a context-sensitive "problem-solving" rationale underlying the innovation	

Table 1: Perspectives on the rationale for and feasibility of the development of the SARC

All three respondents felt they were closely involved in the **design of the five-year SARC development plan**, and saw the key event as being the assessment visit made to all campuses by the consultant. However, the beneficiary considered that her involvement had commenced before the visit, when the subject of improving existing resources was first raised by the donor, and also through visits to SARCs

at other Language Centres in Jakarta and Bandung arranged by the Project. The donor also felt closely involved in pre-assessment visit "awareness-raising" activities, which had been aimed at stimulating the beneficiary to think about the feasibility of SARC development in the context of her own campus and at helping her gain an appreciation of the various responsibilities involved in running a functioning SARC. She had played a key role in organizing the assessment visit, drawing up Terms of Reference, and appointing the consultant who was assigned to:

- (i) assess the feasibility of and commitment to the proposed development, in collaboration with the beneficiary; and
- (ii) draw up a five-year development plan, in close cooperation with the ELTC staff.

The consultant considered that she had played a central role in trying to work out the most feasible model for SARC development by translating data collected from the visits into concrete strategies, objectives, time-scales and training inputs and outputs.

Another important feature of the pre-implementation stage in which the beneficiary and the donor felt they had important roles was the incorporation of a SARC into the organizational structure of the ELTC and the appointment of a SARC Coordinator and an administrative assistant. This required a formal commitment at the institutional level and direct action by the beneficiary.

Table 2 shows the respondents' perceptions of the important features of the SARC development plan (now retrospective and based on actual experience); no aspect was given particular priority over the others.

All three respondents had a common view of the **range of stakeholders** in the development; however, when asked to "prioritize" stakeholders, each came up with a differing basis for prioritization. The beneficiary ranked stakeholders from the bottom up, beginning with those responsible for developing and maintaining the SARC, moving next to the immediate beneficiaries (the lecturers) and then outwards to the funders. The donor did not offer an explicit basis for her ranking, but her list is more top-down and supply-oriented in nature. This might be explained by the fact that in the initial stages of the innovation, official approval for the planned development had to be sought from higher levels of Project management. The consultant perceived two distinct categories of stakeholder: she put forward a top-down list of *implementers*, starting with funders, planners and agents and ending with the users, and a second list of *beneficiaries*, beginning with the users and

expanding bottom-upwards to other beneficiaries of the innovation. It is clear from her two lists that some stakeholders are both implementers *and* beneficiaries.

BENEFICIARY	DONOR	CONSULTANT
Involvement of ELTC staff in the process of writing up the development plan which gave us a sense of responsibility and made us feel part of whole process	Learn-by-doing	Involvement of ELTC staff in process of developing plan therefore realistic targets & time-frame
Systematic breakdown of plan into workable units that suit the Centre's specific conditions in terms of staff & resources	Systematic	Key cut-off points to determine further resourcing. Less detailed after Year 2 to allow further planning to come from implementers
	Strategic training initiatives	On-going staff development
	Role of monitoring	On-going monitoring

Table 2: Perceptions of important features of the development plan

Perceptions: implementation

Using categories from Crocker's (1987) model for project management, activities that have taken place to date during the implementation stages of the innovation were identified and categorized, and an attempt was made to establish an order of implementation. Considerable overlap made precise definition of categories and categorization of activities difficult; however, the following definitions were established:

- (i) *Institutional development* was defined as being the development of the organizational structure of the ELTC at UNCEN Manokwari.
- (ii) *Staff development* was defined as being the training of existing ELTC teaching, administrative and technical staff.
- (iii) *Resource development* was defined as being the development of physical resources (building, hardware and software) and the *addition* of human resources.

(iv) *Program development* was defined as being the development of SARC services.

Table 3 summarizes the data gathered. The table clearly shows the large number of stakeholders involved and the different levels at which they operate. The complexity and interdependence of the roles that each plays in the implementation process is also evident. The order of implementation is by no means linear, and activities move to and fro between different categories. It would seem that those involved in the implementation process have identified "critical paths" throughout the process based on an on-going evaluation of developments in all four categories, and that they have had to make decisions on:

- (i) when, and in which category, an activity or intervention is required; and
- (ii) who among the stakeholders (depending on their institutional roles) are most usefully involved.

One important point to note, which is not apparent from the table, is the fact that there is often an overlap between staff development activities and other categories; for example, during the Resource Centre Management and Administration (RCMA) course, SARC Coordinators and Administrators modified, refined and expanded the five-year development plan.

A number of **perceived successes** in the implementation of the innovation were identified by all three respondents. The following is a list of the successes from the perspective of the beneficiary, the respondent who is perhaps closest to "grassroots" development:

- physical development of the SARC
- development of organizational structure of the SARC
- improved library collection of ELT materials and journals
- establishment of accessing systems
- ability to process library collection
- ability to produce self-access materials packages
- production of 45 packages
- improved understanding and appreciation of SARC use
- improved management and administrative skills of SARC Coordinator and administrative assistant
- support from FAPERTA in terms of the supply of temporary teaching staff, stationery and furniture, and hardware maintenance

CATEGORY	ACTIVITIES & ORDER OF IMPLEMENTATION	ROLES OF STAKEHOLDERS
Institutional Development	1 management infrastructure established 2 assessment visit/design of long-term development plan 8 monitoring visit 1 Project annual ELTC work plan	Beneficiary: planner; implementer; evaluator ELTC teachers: trainees; implementers Donor: promotor; monitor; evaluator Dean, FAPERTA: promotor; supporter Consultant: planner; advisor; monitor; evaluator Beneficiary: planner; promotor; negotiator; implementer Donor: planner; promotor; negotiator; monitor; approver LPIU: financier EIUDP: approver; financier FAPERTA: approver; financier
Staff Development	3 RCMA course 4 technician training 7 self-access materials development workshop 9 self-access learner orientation & training workshop	Beneficiary: needs analyst; planner; trainee; trainer; monitor; manager; evaluator Donor: planner; implementer; supplier; evaluator Consultant/IALF: program designer; implementer EIUDP: financier LPIU: financier; supplier ELTC staff: trainees; implementers
Resource Development	1 allocation of space 1 addition of two new teaching staff 5 equipment purchase 6 book purchase	Beneficiary: planner; manager; implementer Donor: promotor; implementer; supplier UNCEN: supplier FAPERTA: supplier; employer ELTC staff: managers; users
Programme Development	3 SARC library services 7 SARC use by course participants only 7 materials development	Beneficiary: planner; manager; implementer; monitor; evaluator Donor: evaluator Consultant: evaluator ELTC staff: implementers; monitors; evaluators FAPERTA: financier; evaluator ELTC users: learners; evaluators

Table 3: Categorization of activities and order of implementation

The donor and the consultant considered that the demonstrated commitment of teachers and the level of institutional support of FAPERTA should also be classed as successes.

The three respondents were unanimous in their opinion that a key factor in the achievement of these successes has been a greater recognition on the part of FAPERTA, local project personnel and ELTC staff of the role that the ELTC and its SARC can play in improving the EL ability of university staff and students.

There were two major **perceived problems**:

- (i) delays in implementation due to the loss of staff; and
- (ii) poor access to funds and supplies from the Local Project Implementation Unit (LPIU). The LPIU is responsible for the provision of Government of Indonesia (GOI) funding to the project: ELTCs are unable to control their own budgets. Materials development has been very slow, partly because teacher hours spent on this activity do not receive financial recognition from the LPIU in the same way that classroom teaching hours do, so teachers are often not paid for their work.

Comments made by the donor and the consultant on communication problems that have affected implementation are worth noting at this point, although they relate to ELTCs in other target institutions within the Project. Communication between the other SARCs involved in the Project has been poor and this has affected the rate at which the collection of self-access resource packages has been built up, a target set collaboratively by the SARC Coordinators themselves. Problems were also perceived to exist in internal communication between ELTC Heads and SARC Coordinators, and between the ELTCs and the LPIU. Delays in implementation at the other centres are often caused by staff time constraints (since all the teachers have a workload outside the ELTC), and by a lack of clarity in areas of GOI financial responsibility - in other words, by a lack of specific guidelines regarding the division of financial responsibilities between the LPIU, the university, and the ELTC itself using its self-generated income.

Perceptions: monitoring and evaluation

There are three main channels for monitoring and evaluation of the processes and the products of the innovation:

- (i) broad, project-level channels established during Phase I of the Project;
- (ii) specific channels built into the five-year development plan through the identification of time-scales and "milestones" which require on-going assessment; and
- (iii) internal monitoring on a regular basis as part of ELTC operations.

All three respondents considered that they had played an active role in monitoring and assessing all activities in the four project management categories discussed above, and indicated mechanisms by which this had been achieved. The donor identified established mechanisms at the overall Project planning and management level, namely the Annual Review Meeting and the Annual Coordination and Planning Meeting, which are concerned with the monitoring and evaluation of all Project components. A checklist and written reporting system has been established between the beneficiary and the donor; monitoring visits have been conducted by the donor and the consultant; and the beneficiary referred to her internal role as monitor and evaluator. In the area of staff training, training reports, which are completed by trainers and/or the training institution, identify individual areas of strength and weakness, as well as making recommendations for further training.

Respondents were asked to identify any changes to the development plan that had been introduced as a result of monitoring and evaluation. Two changes cited at UNCEN Manokwari were readjustments to the target set for the number of self-access study packages to be produced, and to the time-frame for their production. A more significant change occurred at one of the other centres, where a planned training input was postponed on account of a lack of institutional support. One other important change was the bringing forward of a meeting for SARC Coordinators and Administrators from 1996 to mid-1995, in recognition of the need to strengthen the mutual support network and enhance possibilities for joint planning. Decisions to effect these changes were regarded by all three stakeholders as having been made on the basis of joint consultation and discussion with the ELTC staff.

Perceptions: sustainability

Necessary, but not sufficient, conditions that were identified as being important for the future sustainability of the SARC may be summarized as follows:

- adequate levels of staffing
- staff who are aware of what is involved in, and are committed to updating, expanding and promoting resources
- support from the university in terms of infrastructure and finance
- devolution of greater budgetary control to the ELTC
- active involvement by university management and academic staff in planning SARC services
- motivation on the part of the campus community to improve their EL skills
- ability of teachers to provide services in autonomous language learning
- communication networks between this and other ELTCs involved in the Project

Aspects that were considered to be particularly problematic centred on:

- staffing issues, in particular the lack of staff time and difficulties in recruiting new members of staff;
- deeply ingrained teacher-oriented learning styles;
- generally low motivation among academic staff to spend time on professional development, if this involves a sustained commitment in terms of effort and time; and
- difficulties in accessing timely funding and supplies from the university.

The development plan incorporated the following strategies for addressing these issues:

- cut-off points for further inputs if agreed conditions (for example, staffing levels) are not adequately met;
- staff training in self-directed learning (SDL) and in strategies for encouraging learners;
- SDL orientation for users;
- design of more needs-based English for Specific Purposes materials;
- introduction of fee-for-service activities at the SARC to earn outside revenue; and
- a meeting for SARC Coordinators to encourage networking.

It is interesting to compare these perceptions with the initial concerns of the respondents with respect to feasibility, outlined above.

An issue that has not yet been addressed in any detail is a promotion strategy to open up the SARC to the campus community, and to plan activities that will involve these potential users in the planning and development of its services. The relevance of the product - the services offered - will be a crucial factor in sustainability.

Conclusion

Through the process of reflection and evaluation both of progress to date and of potential developments, we, as stakeholders in this innovation, have been able to determine critical paths, to identify where efforts have been, or should be, focused at any one time. The categories that have been used have proved to be somewhat arbitrary, and it is clear that during implementation stakeholders have been working across several categories simultaneously and at different levels. The process has been a blending of top-down and bottom-up initiatives, and regular communication and collaboration between the various stakeholders has been crucial to progress.

Notes

- 1 Following White (1993), we prefer the term *innovation* to *change*. Although innovation involves change, it is more suggestive, as White points out, of a *deliberate* effort to bring about improvement.
2. The term *adoption* is used to refer to the extent to which the innovation has actually occurred, and is related to the concept of sustainability after the life of the Project.

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Appendix: Questionnaire

Initiation

1. Why is the development of a Self-access Resource Centre a Project objective?
2. How was this decided?
3. What were your original thoughts about the idea?
(Feasibility? Practicality? Usefulness? Difficulty? Improved ELTC services?)
4. Who do you consider to be the "stakeholders" in this development?
Can you prioritize the stakeholders on the list that you have drawn up?
What are the reasons for your decisions?
5. How would you define your role in the design stage of the development plan?
6. What do you consider to be the important features of the development plan that was drawn up?

Implementation

1. Can we use the table below to characterize what has been done so far? Where an activity falls into multiple categories, we should try to cross-reference it.

Category	Activities	Order of Implementation	Your role	Role of other stakeholders
Institutional Development				
Staff Development				
Resource Development				
Programme Development				

2. What have been the main successes in carrying out the development plan to date?
What *specific* factors do you think have contributed to this success?
3. What have been the main problems in carrying out the development plan to date?
What *specific* factors do you think have been responsible for these problems?

Monitoring and evaluation

1. What aspects of the development plan have been evaluated? How has this been done?
2. What has been your role in this? What has been the role of other stakeholders?
3. What aspects of the development plan have changed as a result of monitoring and evaluation?

Who has been responsible for deciding on the changes?

Sustainability

1. If we talk about the future *sustainability* of the Self-access Resource Centre, what particular things do you think of as being *necessary* conditions for this to happen?
2. What, if anything, makes these particularly problematic?
3. What strategies for addressing them are in your development plan?
If none, what should be there?
4. In your opinion, at what level and by whom should the problems be addressed?

Ensuring sustainability of language centres after development projects

Nangsari Ahmad and Patrick L. Adlam

Abstract: In this paper we consider an approach to revitalizing university language centres and networks through the creation of a sustainable basis of operation and cooperation that goes beyond the provision of predeparture English Language Training (ELT) for scholarship awardees on development projects. After clarifying what we mean by the terms "sustainability" and "university language centre" in the context of development projects, we trace the evolution of language centres (LCs) in Indonesia from their origins at a national Workshop on Language Centres in 1971. We then look at how LCs and an ELT network in Sumatra fared during and after government policy revisions and a decade of participation in a large-scale higher education project during the 1980s. The paper concludes with a discussion of the relationship between sustainability and institutional development.

Sustainability, language centres and development projects

We believe that the term *sustainability* should be used in the context of language centres (LCs) not only with reference to a centre's financial *viability*, but also to suggest *vitality*; that is, the capacity of the LC to maintain a *purposeful* existence - which is, after all, the reason or justification for sustaining it.

In Indonesian state universities and teacher-training institutes, most LCs exist (at least in theory) outside faculty language departments. Over the last 20 years some have become so exclusively associated with intensive predeparture English Language Training (ELT) courses that a recent decrease in the demand for such programs in western Indonesia has raised questions about the sustainability of these centres after the withdrawal of development projects. The condition of many LCs in Sumatra today suggests that a better case could be made for euthanasia than for sustainability. And yet, back in 1971, at a national Workshop on Language Centres, there was no shortage of reasons in the minds of leading Indonesian scholars for setting up these centres. Their opinions are all the more interesting today for having been expressed before the advent of large-scale foreign assistance in national development projects and the concomitant predeparture language programs.

Establishment of language centres in Indonesia

In June 1971 the Indonesian Ministry of Education and Culture sponsored a three-day Workshop on Language Centres, with the aim of formulating policy for the establishment of LCs, in particular English Language Centres. In his opening address, the Director-General of Higher Education pointed out that no more than 50% of fellowship places for overseas training were being taken up, because so many candidates were failing the English language requirements. Topic areas of the Workshop included LC organization, curricula, staff training and funding. Working papers were presented by the country's leading language experts representing a number of Indonesian universities and teacher-training institutes. Also attending were representatives from the National Development Planning Board (BAPPENAS) and the Cabinet Secretariat, as well as from donor agencies.

Various perspectives on the mission of LCs were put forward in the working papers, depending on whether presenters chose to focus on short-term or long-term objectives, or tried to keep both in view. In a paper on staff-training needs for LCs, Halim (1971) acknowledged the urgency of the need for short-term training courses, but urged that these should not be conducted at the expense of the long-term development objectives of the LCs that were to run them:

It is assumed here that the projected language centers will be permanent autonomous institutions... This assumption implies that the establishment of the centers will not merely represent an emergency measure on the Ministry's part in attempting to overcome current language and language-teaching problems.

Among the long-term objectives that Halim envisaged for LCs was the improvement of language teaching in general (both Indonesian and foreign languages, particularly English) in schools and universities. He suggested that LCs could also conduct feasibility studies of proposals for reforms in language education, as well as carrying out research in the fields of Applied Linguistics, Theoretical Linguistics and Philology. Other functions he considered relevant to the mission of LCs included the organization of regular national and regional seminars, as well as cooperation with LCs overseas, especially elsewhere in Southeast Asia.

While individual speakers saw the aims and long-term objectives of these centres in very broad terms, the official conclusions of the Workshop emphasized the immediate short-term objective: intensive ELT courses for faculty and governmental personnel in order to maximize the benefit from overseas training opportunities for national development.

Ostensibly, three possible organizational structures were formulated at the Workshop:

- (i) *Independent, stand-alone LCs*, separate from universities and teacher-training institutes, having their own permanent management, teachers and technical staff.
- (ii) *University LCs*, sited in and dependent on universities or teacher-training institutes for premises and staff.
- (iii) *LC projects*, an arrangement whereby sites failing to meet the minimum requirements for university LCs were to be assigned a project head to facilitate the development needed to qualify for LC status.

In practice, these three alternatives quickly became reduced to one - university LCs dependent on the host institution.

Soon after the Workshop 12 LCs were established, most with some degree of foreign assistance, as part of a National Language Centre (NLC) Project headed by Amran Halim. The LCs were located in state universities and teacher-training institutes in various parts of the country, including three in Sumatra, and constituted a network coordinated by the NLC in Jakarta.

When the NLC Project ended in 1974, the LCs were handed over to the Rectors of their respective host institutions to be, in Halim's words (personal interview), "ignored or maintained as the Rectors saw fit". English language support courses for staff continued to be provided by some of the centres, but language research initiatives and related budgets were taken over by the regional offices of the Ministry of Education and Culture.

Loss of status

In 1980 the Indonesian Government announced a new national policy on the basic organizational structure of state institutions of higher learning. In the consequent restructuring, LCs were downgraded and renamed. Some were now called *laboratorium bahasa* (language laboratories), often regardless of whether their facilities included a lab or not, while others were reduced to the status of *program* and placed under faculties or community service centres. Some LCs remained directly under their Rectors, as non-structural in-service training programs, often acquiring English acronyms, such as SELTU (Service English Language Training Unit) or

SEU (Service English Unit), which testified to foreign assistance in their development. However, more significant than the loss of status and the name changes (for convenience we shall continue to use the term *language centres*), were the rationale behind the policy change and the reaction to these changes on the part of the LC staff.

The aim of the new regulation was to give the Government of Indonesia greater control over the increasingly rapid and often random growth of its higher education system (Amidjaja and Sapi'e 1980). Its provisions limited and standardized the number and nature of basic structural components of institutions of higher education. The main criterion for identifying which organizational units were major structural components was the relevance of the unit's activities to the triple mission (*tridharma*) of tertiary education institutions in Indonesia: teaching, research, and community service. Measured against this yardstick, it is fair to say that university LCs got the status they deserved.

As for the reaction of LC staff, no-one appeared to be particularly disconcerted by the status change. LC staff had always been part-timers with career paths elsewhere. Opportunities for extra income were not affected. And opportunism is usually about as much idealism as part-timers anywhere can afford to have.

It is interesting to speculate, in hindsight, whether matters might have turned out differently for university LCs if they had embodied the broader aims and functions originally envisaged by some of the speakers at the 1971 Workshop. But by 1980 not even the most active remnants of these organizations played any direct role in the mainstream academic life of their parent institutions. They were involved neither in teaching or testing undergraduate students, nor in developing language curricula, nor in translating textbooks for degree programs. Where they had language laboratories, students (certainly those from non-language departments) were usually denied access to them. Their research function had been lost to other organizations. And even if we define *community service* in a commercial as opposed to an altruistic sense, the services rendered to the community tended to be the result of community initiatives, with local individuals and companies requesting instructors, rather than being offered programs by the LC.

Enter the Western Universities Agricultural Education Project

The Western Universities Agricultural Education (WUAE) Project was a ten-year joint Indonesian-American development effort, which aimed to strengthen the

agricultural and related faculties of all state universities and teacher-training institutes in western Indonesia (hereafter, BKS-B institutions). To this end, one component of the project was a graduate study program in American universities for selected staff from eligible faculties.

In support of its graduate study program, the WUAE Project provided predeparture ELT on a scale unequalled before or since by any other development project in western Indonesia. Between 1982 and 1991, 29 native-speaker ELT specialists and coordinators were assigned to programs run at the 11 host institutions. Collectively, they accounted for 676 person-months, or 47% of the total foreign technical assistance allocated for the entire project (Graham 1991).

At least five of the host institutions already had in-service ELT programs operating regularly or occasionally before the project began. Those without such programs were assisted in setting them up. Whether pre-existing or new, these programs had local teachers and managers assigned to them from the host institution, while expatriate staff were accountable to the project's ELT Program Coordinator based at Sriwijaya University (UNSRI) in Palembang, South Sumatra. A fact that receives very scant attention in the project reports is that most of the teaching during the life of the project was carried out by local teachers. At UNSRI, where the number of foreign ELT staff was greatest, over 75% of the total course hours in the period 1981-1989 were taught by local teachers (Alten 1989).

Another lost opportunity

While the original aim of the ELT program was to prepare scholarship awardees for overseas training, there was a change in the scope of objectives in Phase II of the project (1986-1991). In the preamble to an overview of the ELT component, the Team Leader (Love 1989) reports that:

In Phase II of the project, the program also included efforts to strengthen Teaching English as a Foreign Language (TEFL) Centres in the BKS-B institutions. These centers are designed to teach English to university lecturers.

Similarly, the Mid-project Evaluation of Phase II (Dukesbury 1989: 20) noted that one of the objectives of the language component was:

to upgrade on a sustainable basis the administrative and teaching capabilities of the English Language Programs at the BKS/B Universities.

And in the Final Report (Graham 1991: 7), listed under the heading of "major project achievements" are "strengthened BKS-B institutes for English language training" and "an inter-university network in English language". Though rather sceptical about the sustainability of funding for all project networks, Dukesbury (1989: 51) had this to say about the ELT network:

Among the institutional networks, the English Language Network has the greatest potential to be sustained, since its particular focus is a continuing concern to all universities. *Stimulus for continued support will be found in the large number of donor projects which sponsor overseas training for staff from BKS/B member institutions.*

(emphasis added)

However, by 1990 funding had been discontinued, and by 1991 the ELT network was defunct (Graham 1991: 75). Today many ex-network member LCs are themselves fading away or already in limbo. So what went wrong? The answer to this question concerns not only the financial viability of institutions, but also their *vitality*, as defined at the beginning of this paper.

Due to the combined constraints of contemporary Government policy and project implementation priorities (see Crocker 1987 for a discussion of this issue in ELT development projects in general), there had been no significant achievements in the institutional development of university LCs in terms of strengthening their position in, and their ability to contribute to, the host institution. Throughout the WUAE Project, development initiatives remained by default within the limits set by the short-term objectives of program implementation. Had cooperative commitments been made beyond this level, in areas where institutional development of the LCs might also have benefited the host institution, then the potential for sustainability could have been enhanced, at little or no extra financial cost to the project. Instead, there was the familiar post-language project legacy of books, tapes and teaching experience, but no scheme for their use in further development efforts beyond waiting for the next aid project. Generally speaking, local-level initiatives have been very rare and under-supported. Most LCs have failed to diversify their functions, programs and sources of funding beyond those of the projects they served in the 1980s, and consequently now exist in name only.

Institutional strengthening for sustainability: the need for a wider role

Over the last 20 years, development projects have increased the language training

capability of host institutions. Finding well-qualified and experienced English language instructors is no longer the problem it once was, due in large part to two decades of foreign grant-assisted and loan-assisted scholarship programs and technical counterpart training schemes. However, the benefit to be gained from such human resource development depends on the extent to which the trained personnel can be retained on a long-term basis and managed efficiently by the host institution.

Development projects in the 1990s tend to give greater documentary recognition to the importance of "institutional strengthening" for the sustainability of their outputs. However, the level of commitment required, in terms of both attention and effort, to bring about such strengthening is usually underestimated by donors and recipients alike. As noted above, sporadic commitment is endemic to LCs staffed by part-timers. More remarkable is the bewilderment expressed by donor agencies over the difficulty in getting project-assisted LCs accorded higher status within host institutions. As we see it - and this is the basic argument of our paper - the main obstacle is still the limited function that such centres perform within the host institution. Conducting effective English language courses for staff, while commendable, is not sufficient to justify the level of official recognition within the structural organization of the host institution sought by the donor agency and their counterparts.

What is being overlooked is the fact that the need for language assistance in Indonesian tertiary education goes far beyond the scope of project-related language programs run by LCs. A preoccupation with predeparture ELT programs has obscured the considerable support that university LCs could be giving to undergraduate degree programs as well as to the wider community. Even the most recent tender documents and associated frameworks for higher education development projects, whose stated aim is to improve the quality of first degree programs, identify LCs exclusively with short-term predeparture ELT for academic staff. In the meantime undergraduate ELT programs stumble on with *ad hoc* coordination, little or no quality control, overcrowded classes, ill-defined aims and unrealistic learning objectives for the limited time allocated to these courses in the curriculum (an average of 32 hours per degree).

What seems to be lacking is the will and idealism to pool and direct the resources of LCs to support the main duty of tertiary education institutions, which is, as Bachtiar (1971) pointed out: "to enable *students* to obtain specialized knowledge in their chosen field of study". It may be that most undergraduates will never have the opportunity to study overseas, but nevertheless *they are in need of ELT* to support their major field of study and to facilitate the role that they are expected to play in national development after they graduate.

Recent legislation on national higher education in Indonesia gives tertiary education institutions greater freedom in the management of their organizations and the curricula of their degree programs. Recent revisions in the national curricula for tertiary education have seen English re-classified as a "subject basic to major fields of study" (*MKDK*), and in some degree programs the credit allocation has been doubled. Furthermore, the possibility and the extent of credit allocation for English language beyond the national requirement can now be decided locally. Here is an ideal chance for LCs in these institutions, and the donor agencies that work with them, to do a better job than has hitherto been possible.

Conclusion

The potential sustainability of LCs and LC networks after the cessation of development project funding depends on a two-fold ability to maintain both financial viability and the functional vitality required to warrant formal integration into the structural organization of the host institutions. Financial **viability** is a matter of becoming self-supporting, through the development of a range of programs, in order at least to meet the cost of maintaining and developing the LC, and ideally to make some contribution to the maintenance and development of the host institution in the collective pursuit of a common mission. The **vitality** of a LC lies in its ability to define and fulfil functions that are relevant to that mission, and to develop similarly useful functions in relation to sibling organizations, in particular to the main structural components of the host institution.

Sustainability of LCs after development projects can be optimized by viewing the centres first and foremost as institutions or institutional units, rather than as intermittent programs. Careful consideration should be given by donor and host to wider institutional issues and applications when planning and establishing LCs in support of short-term language training objectives associated with development projects. In this way, other language training needs within the host institution can also be addressed, often at little or no extra financial cost to the project. Early identification in the life of a project of various groups that stand to benefit from the availability of a LC on campus is necessary to support institutional development goals. If there is a metaphysical dimension to something as worldly as higher education development projects, it might include a karmic law to the effect that such projects are sustainable to the extent that the benefits they bring are transferable.

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Quadrant III

CURRICULUM CONCERNS

A modular training framework: an appropriate response to the issues of relevance and home environment application in a teacher education project?

David Lochmohr Prescott

Abstract: The Government of Lao PDR has set a high priority on the development of English language proficiency within the country. There have been, however, considerable impediments to the realisation of this goal, in particular the lack of English language curricula in schools and teacher training colleges and a lack of common and appropriate instructional materials. The Australian Agency for International Development (AusAID) has provided support for these needs through the English Language Training Project (ELTP) and more recently through the Lao-Australia English Language Project (LAELP).

Edith Cowan University was involved as a training provider for in-Australia aspects of the original ELTP. A modular training framework was utilised to facilitate this work. The initial part of this paper describes the background to the project and then addresses reasons for the adoption of this approach. Issues such as program design and budgeting, continuing language support, enhancement of language development in professional training environments and considerations of flexibility are examined. Discussion and illustration follows of program components within the context of the Modular Training Framework Model, and issues of relevance and home environment application are considered. The paper concludes with an examination of the relationship of these two concerns to training and development and to notions of collaborative development and sustainability.

Project background

Since the introduction of the New Economic Mechanism in 1986 the Government of Lao PDR has placed a high priority on the development of English language proficiency within the country and has recognised the importance of the language as a means of communication both within the Southeast Asian region and in wider international circles. The Government has looked to Australia as an important

provider of donor-funded English language training (ELT) to take a lead in English language projects both in-country and overseas.

Australia's involvement as a provider of development assistance to the country dates from 1975, when the Lao People's Democratic Republic (Lao PDR) was proclaimed. Recent bilateral activity has been dominated by the Mekong River Bridge project (the Lao-Thai "Friendship Bridge") but English language projects have enjoyed high priority and received considerable support.

The immediately relevant background to the project under discussion in this paper is as follows. A Strategy and Project Identification Mission from Australia visited Lao PDR in 1992 to identify potential ELT projects consistent with the (then current) needs and priorities of both the Lao and Australian governments. The strategy developed as a result of that mission, which became known as the English Language Training Project (ELTP), supported continued Australian ELT assistance to Lao PDR in three phases: Preparatory (1992 - June 1994); Implementation (July 1994 - June 1997); and Development (July 1997 - 1999). Subsequently, the second and third phases of this strategy have been revised and incorporated into the Lao-Australia English Language Project (LAELP), which is intended to provide continuity for several discrete AusAID ELT initiatives under a single coordinated management structure. Implementation of LAELP began in June 1995, and the project is scheduled to run for a period of four years.

The involvement of Edith Cowan University (ECU) has been with two strands of the original ELTP: the English Language Curriculum Project and the English Language Training Project Awardee Scheme. Initial association with the ELTP developed from an AusAID request to provide specifications for a practice-oriented training course which incorporated significant components of English language (EL) support and enhancement and which catered for the special needs of the recipient group.

Training framework design: issues

The elements that were to be included in the specifications requested by AusAID (a practice orientation, EL support and enhancement, and special needs) deserve some comment. In a recently-published report Davies & Hase (1995) conclude that most of the problems associated with cooperative educational ventures arise from the fact that the dominant language and concepts which inform the ventures reflect outmoded paradigms of education and training. Bureaucratic impediments,

entrenched academic attitudes, a lack of flexibility in course design and delivery and an unresponsiveness to recipient needs are all cited as reasons for unsuccessful and inappropriate course provision. The request from AusAID to provide specifications for an appropriate course for Lao ELTP awardees was made with the stipulation that impediments such as those identified by Davies & Hase be obviated. Moreover, this request was informed by feedback which the (then) AusAID Field Officer stationed in Vientiane, had received from Lao awardees returning from study in Australia.

In her recent Doctoral thesis Nixon (1994) shows that areas of concern for overseas teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) studying in Australia include, in particular, issues of cultural sensitivity. Most apprehension centres around two questions: the application to home environments of inappropriate and unsuitable teaching techniques; and the imposition of the demands of western education. Nixon's study also identifies where respondents feel their expectations are not being adequately catered to in TESOL courses: attention to respondents' own EL skills, the development of teaching skills, use of technology appropriate to the home environment, and cultural studies.

The design of TESOL programs has been a neglected area of research. This circumstance, noted by Bernhardt and Hammadou (1987), has led to a situation whereby such courses have been based largely on intuition and/or commonsense. However, the feedback from the Lao awardees signified that intuition and commonsense are not always enough, that they have been found wanting as planning tools as Davies & Hase have suggested. Nevertheless, it was with intuition and an expectation that commonsense would be a useful tool that the training framework design for the ELTP at ECU was developed.

Training framework design: application

The issues which shaped the development work and therefore had a considerable bearing on the outcome were of two kinds: first, the structural aspects of design and second, the substance or content which would occupy those structural features. It was necessary to provide the funding agency (AusAID) with a clear course design structure and associated budget costs for approval, and to work within the financial and academic structures of the University, but also to ensure sufficient flexibility to allow for variations in awardees' EL proficiency with potentially variable learning and acquisition pathways. The substance or content had to include continuous EL support (or at least the potential for such) while at the same time incorporating

substantial ESOL teacher-training and development in a practice-oriented environment and catering for the special needs of the recipients.

This requirement that the special needs of the recipient group be catered for was a more complex matter than simply ensuring that the contents of the training and development addressed significant home environment issues. The awardees who studied at ECU were, as has already been indicated, from two strands of the ELTP: the English Language Curriculum Project and the English Language Training Project Awardee Scheme. The special interests of awardees within these two strands included a group concerned with teacher-training; one with curriculum development for the *Matthayom* (lower secondary) level; another with technical teacher-training, and finally a group concerned with *Udom* (upper secondary) level teaching. The initial group of awardees were *Udom* teachers, while the teacher-trainers and curriculum officers came in the second stage of the program. By good luck (intuition and commonsense perhaps), the nature of the framework design allowed the substitution of more pertinent content and the inclusion of more specifically appropriate modules to cater for the particular needs of the second group of awardees without changing the "shape" of the framework and thereby confusing the University and the funding agency.

Such flexibility was especially useful for budgeting arrangements as both the funding agency and the fund management (i.e. the University) were comfortable with the overall structure and not unduly concerned with the costs of specific items of content. The four-phase nature of the framework (April-July/August-December/January-February/March-June) was related to the timing of awardees' fellowships to Australia, semester and inter-semester periods at ECU and the availability of funding from AusAID. In particular the client-driven, modular structure of the programs identified them in University terms as *projects*, which allowed a considerably greater measure of control over the budget revenue and permitted greater flexibility in the employment and payment of specialist staff.

Training framework design: responses

The programs under discussion were client-driven and organised in such a way as to accommodate where possible requests from the various stakeholders. The awardees' interests were carefully attended to by a sensitive and extremely perceptive AusAID Field Officer whose influence on the content modules in the framework design was considerable. Similarly, the concerns of the Lao and Australian Governments were, to a large extent, channelled through the Field Officer, so that

the responses were informed by these concerns as well. The significance of this interpretative role cannot be overstated. One of the great difficulties in providing appropriate training for clients from a remote environment is getting a real sense of the needs, at once independent of the official government and agency views and yet more wholly informative than those likely to be offered by the awardees, particularly in the early stages of training. The singularly useful Janus-like facility of being able to articulate the actual needs of the recipient group and at the same time to relate those needs to a knowledge of what should be possible in the host environment is a rare quality in a Field Officer; the programs discussed in this paper benefited from this attribute. The results of these propitious circumstances are the four training programs (*figs. 1-3*) which exhibit the diversity of response and the accommodation of differing needs which the project required.

The programs developed for the Lao awardees which adopted the modular framework design were underpinned by continuous EL support and development. This support was provided through the ECU English Language Intensive Courses for Overseas Students (ELICOS) Centre, which conducts a range of courses offering successively more challenging language work in preparation of students for entry to University award courses. The modular framework allowed for shifts in emphasis as appropriate, beginning with intensive EL input at levels appropriate for each awardee and introducing the other specialist content modules through subsequent phases of the programs. This underpinning of the programs provided by the continuous involvement in ELICOS addressed the AusAID request for a training course which incorporated significant components of EL support and enhancement. It also ensured that a balance was negotiated between, on the one hand, the input with which the awardees were provided through the ELICOS support in managed, systematically structured environments, and on the other, the more demanding professional contexts of the specialist modules which demanded use and development of communicative competence.

The training program frameworks presented in Figures 1-3 clearly illustrate the divergent needs of the awardees in the specialist modules of each program. The greatest commonalities exist between the program for the *Udom* teachers and that designed for the teacher-trainers (*fig. 1*). These programs show most clearly the substantial extent of the EL support. The significance of the AusAID request for this component in the training programs is clearly illustrated by the International English Language Testing System (IELTS) test scores achieved by the awardees prior to departure to Australia. Overall bandscores ranged from 3.5 to 6.0, with some individual scores on some of the sub-tests as low as 2.5. Thus, the significant amount of EL support in the April-July phase of each program and the continuation of this content module through the subsequent phases can be viewed as a response

both to an official request and to an imperative need. It might be thought of as a requirement for the enhancement of local autonomy (Darnell 1979: 11), for without the language development which the 1120 hours of EL instruction produced the value of the rest of the programs would have been diminished and little measure of independence would have been achieved.

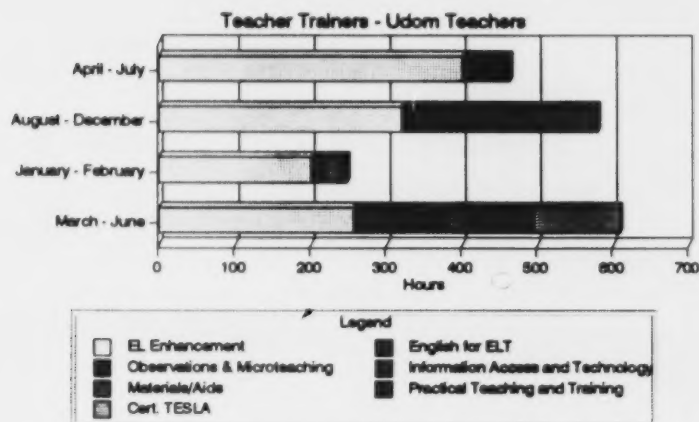


Figure 1: Modular training program for teacher-trainers/Udom teachers

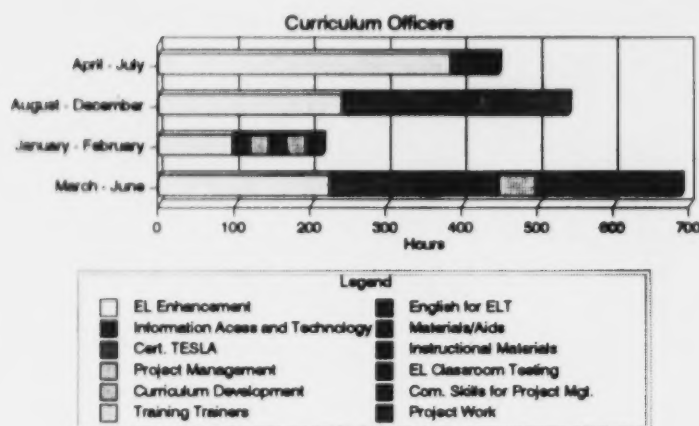


Figure 2: Modular training program for curriculum officers

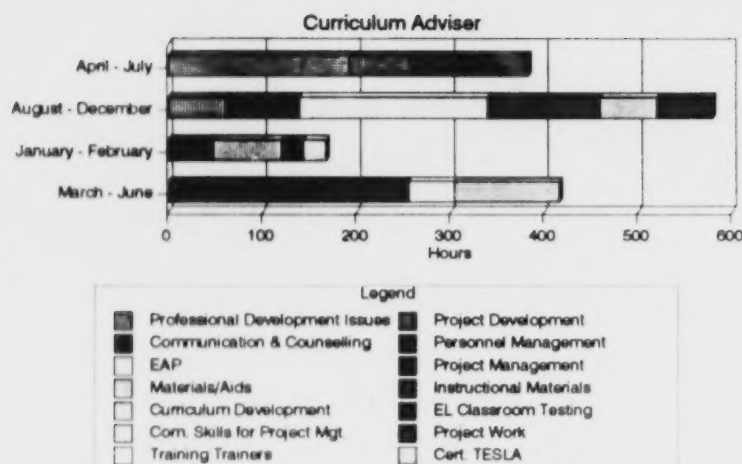


Figure 3: Modular training program for the curriculum adviser

Training framework design: content

Comment has already been made on the capacity of the ECU ELICOS courses to cater for differing levels and to provide varied learning and acquisition pathways. The teacher-trainers and the curriculum officers studied at more advanced ELICOS levels in the EL modules of their programs than did the *Udom* teachers. Individual weaknesses in a particular macroskill could be given special attention within the framework without requiring organizational or structural shifts. It was very much a case of providing the flexibility to make appropriate academic decisions without the necessity to make design changes. Then too, the *Udom* teachers' program and the teacher-trainers' program were similar in structure and seemingly similar in content. Appearances and labels can, however, be deceptive; in this instance they masked considerable differences in content in terms of scope and levels of difficulty. While the concerns of both the teacher-trainers and the *Udom* teachers were centred on the same broad issues (fig. 4), the complexity and extent of those concerns differed, not only between the two groups but also among the teacher-trainers. The technical teacher-trainers had specific concerns and interests which they wished to pursue, particularly in the three modules: LESSON OBSERVATIONS, MATERIALS/AIDS and PRACTICAL TEACHING. Again, the training framework allowed these special needs to be catered for within the existing structure.

TEACHER-TRAINERS UDOM TEACHERS	
ENGLISH LANGUAGE ENHANCEMENT LESSON OBSERVATIONS MATERIALS/AIDS CERT TESLA	ENGLISH FOR ELT INFORMATION ACCESS AND TECHNOLOGY PRACTICAL TEACHING

Figure 4 : Content of teacher-trainers/Udom teachers programs

A number of writers (e.g. Hutchinson & Waters 1987; Breen 1987) have drawn attention to the importance of staying in touch with the needs of learners throughout the changes that occur during a language program. Negotiating the responses to these changes with the learners themselves, particularly in the latter stages of a course when increased confidence and understanding on both sides is more likely to produce informed results, can strengthen a program and greatly increase its relevance.

In developing the training program for the English Language Curriculum Project considerably more negotiation and adaptation was necessary than for the teachers and the teacher-trainers. To begin with there were two strands to this project - the EL curriculum officers and the EL curriculum adviser - and the training requirements of the two were seen as different both by AusAID and by the Laos. Then too, the backgrounds and experience of the participants within these strands were not as uniform as they tended to be with the awardees in the other training programs. Language levels differed quite considerably (IELTS 4.0 - 6.0) and the ultimate responsibilities of the two groups with regard to future work in Lao PDR were dissimilar in some respects.

The results of the negotiation, development and adaptation process were the modular training programs for the curriculum officers (*fig. 2*) and for the curriculum adviser (*fig. 3*). Many components were common to both but discrete modules permitted specific focus within a program where this was seen as desirable. For instance, the curriculum officers' program had a substantial and continued ELICOS component, whereas the curriculum adviser's included 180 hours of English for Academic Purposes (EAP). These differences were negotiated in order to address one of the significant disparities between the two groups - EL proficiency - and also to address a need identified by the adviser, namely to develop language skills to cope with the demands of professional literature. The common and divergent aspects of these two programs are shown in *Figure 5*.

As part of the collaborative training development of the programs a schedule of regular meetings was instituted, organised initially by the curriculum adviser as part of her training application but increasingly devolved to apportion responsibility to the whole group. The purpose of these meetings was to review what had been accomplished, to discuss what had been planned and to negotiate modifications where necessary. On the whole this process worked extremely well, so that from an early stage the exchange of perceptions and the negotiation of direction and content became a mutually beneficial experience. Indeed, the course providers were also beneficiaries in this process as our programs were decidedly strengthened as a result.

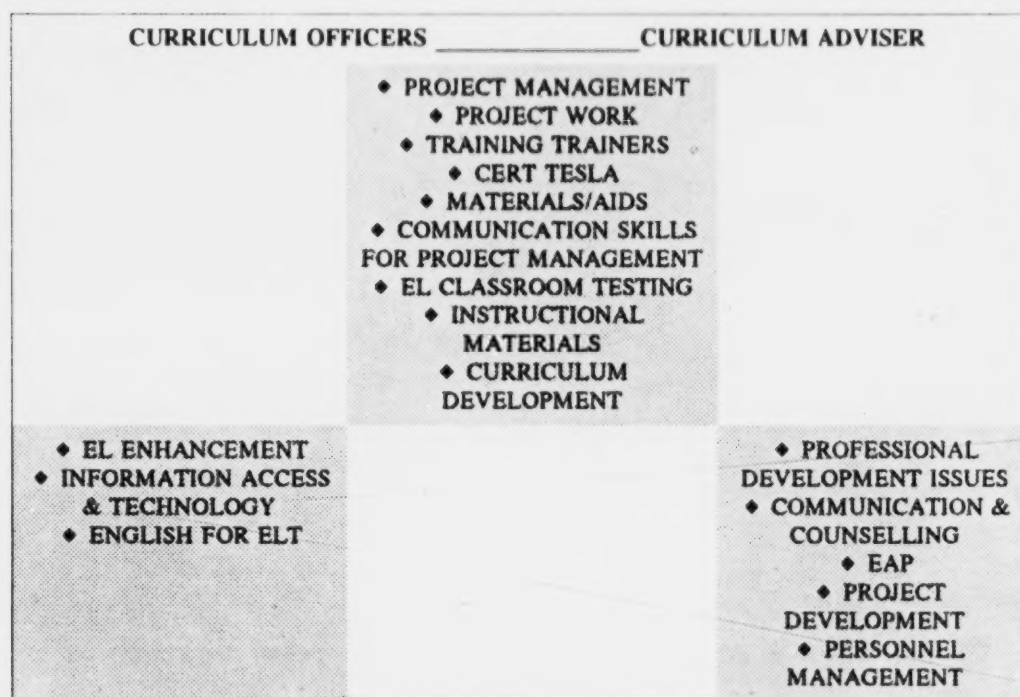


Figure 5 : Common and divergent aspects of the programs of the curriculum officers and the curriculum adviser

Issues of relevance and home environment application

The title of this paper is deliberately framed as a question and it is one to which the answer is perhaps not yet apparent. Some explanation of this comment is necessary. Thus far the concern of the paper has been to detail the extent to which the programs in this project responded to the needs of the various stakeholders involved. An attempt has been made to show how the modular training framework was devised and used to address the various issues related to the project; the application of the framework and the responses within such a structure to those issues; and the content embedded in the modules within the training framework. Wenden (1993) reminds us that learning should be contextualised and interactive. The second of these two criteria was not difficult to cater for, but what of contextualisation? One of the Lao awardees wrote to the AusAID Field Officer three months after arriving in Perth with this to say: "I'd like to say that you've put us on the right track here in Perth. We've found that Edith Cowan Uni, Claremont Campus like a paradise, we have the best...". This does not appear to be an appropriate application for the home environment, but addressing this issue is not a straightforward matter of simply demanding that all aspects of the program be geared to the situation at home. For one thing it is difficult to assess objectively or clearly the needs of any situation from close quarters. There is a great deal to be gained from experiencing alternatives holistically and then determining subsequently how such alternatives might be adjusted to the home environment. In any case the home environment will certainly be shaped by the agendas of powerful interest groups and stakeholders, and it is these which will largely determine the extent to which any alternatives are adopted.

It is important to remember with respect to this project that the original request from AusAID was particularly concerned with practical orientation, EL support and special needs. The issue of relevance to home environment, rather than being stated explicitly, was incorporated within the area of special needs. One of the significant advantages found with the modular training framework was that it permitted a response to special needs as these emerged or developed, and enabled providers to work increasingly with the awardees to "tailor" the content of the modules to perceptions concerning the needs of the home environment. Was it an appropriate response? It is difficult to answer the question at this stage. The concern of the final section of this paper will be to endeavour to explain why this is the case.

Collaborative development, training and sustainability

In a project such as the one outlined in this paper an important issue is the clarity with which the providers perceive the issues their work is to address and the extent of their understanding of the relationship of their efforts to the overall venture. One of the reasons why it is difficult to determine whether the training and development were appropriate or not lies in this issue. As is often the case with work of this sort, the involvement of ECU was a small but highly significant contribution to a larger endeavour. As our involvement in the project has now ceased, a clear answer to the question posed in the title of this paper is something which we may never really know.

In some senses the appropriateness of collaborative development and the prospect of sustainability can be said to result from continuity of involvement and the accumulation of experience and understanding which that implies. A lack of continuity precludes, for instance, any attempt to build on the relationship of trust and mutual respect that often enhances language work in development projects. It also may prevent providers from conducting a thorough-going evaluation of their work within the contexts for which it was intended. Such is the case with this project - a further reason why it is impossible to give a definitive answer to questions about the appropriateness of the response.

It is also important to realise, on the other hand, that out-of-country training does not necessarily promote sustainability, particularly with regard to the personnel involved. Awardees who train overseas do, it is true, experience alternatives which may help them see the issues and problems at home more clearly, but the experience also changes them. While this process is going on changes are occurring at home, so that the situation to which they return is often quite different from that which they anticipate, even allowing for recognition of their personal growth. Inevitable frustrations result which do little to promote sustainability; and providers continuing with, or taking up, phases of projects where this might occur often have to accept responsibility for dealing with the problem.

The final issue which deserves comment and which also contributes to the difficulty of providing an answer to the title question relates to the manner in which projects such as LAELP are awarded by agencies such as AusAID. In a climate where economic rationalism is the notion which shapes bureaucratic thinking, management of finance becomes the critical issue - more important, it would seem, than experience gained in earlier phases of a project; than the quality of earlier provision; or than the belief that continuity of involvement could promote sustainability. The frustration is not so much that the ECU tender for continued involvement in EL provision

to Lao PDR was unsuccessful - since inevitably the successful submission will be subject to the same problems; but rather that there will not be an opportunity to satisfactorily resolve the issue concerning the appropriateness of the modular training framework.

Acknowledgement

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Dialogue journals and negotiating innovations: appropriate technology reconsidered

Jonathan Shaw

Abstract: This paper describes how dialogue journals (Peyton 1990) were used as a technology which allowed teachers to negotiate an innovative educational approach with students. The students in this particular case were university teachers participating in a program aiming to transform Management Education in Vietnam.

The paper consists of two parts. In the first part, a case study is presented of one particular student, typical of many on the program in that, having spent more than ten years as a statistics teacher, he was now studying in order to teach and develop courses in Business Administration. Secondly, Markee's (1986) concept of an appropriate technology model of communicative course design is discussed, and it is argued that the conclusions he then drew restrict the options open to teachers in educational development projects. Concepts drawn from the diffusion of educational innovation literature (principally, Rogers 1983) appear to offer more flexibility in designing language courses in development situations (cf. Markee 1993).

Introduction

It's really difficult to persuade others to change their opinions. When I read what Mr. Thuong writes, I don't feel fluently. Theirs are something vague and confused - Lam, Nhan and I tell him that, but finally nothing is changed. He always tries to preserve his own opinion. Each person can have his own way to examine a problem. For instance, in my opinion, this course is about language, computers and methodology. But Jon can have different opinion about it. In this public reportback, you suggest me to present our piece of work. It's easier for me to present when I arrange the facts in my own way. So you can see some differences between what I say and what you read in the article.

As you say, people like to speak with foreigners when they study language. But sometimes they have nothing to say with foreigners, especially the introverts as I. Moreover, I am a teacher so I am afraid of saying something wrong,

as "I'd like dog food" instead of "I'd like dog meat". This weakness makes me slow progress in learning language. So I like to drink beer with you. In a party besides the communication, I can speak more easily "beer in word out".

(Hung)

These comments reflect shared concerns on a range of issues: educational goals and objectives, classroom methodology, working in groups, Hung's Affective Filter and how to learn languages. They were written by a Vietnamese university teacher in a dialogue journal he kept as part of a two-month pre-Masters language and computer course developed and implemented by my colleague Terry Clayton and myself in Ho Chi Minh City. The course was the first element in a Swiss-funded project which aims to make Management Education in Vietnam more relevant to the present economic realities of the country by turning university teachers with backgrounds in various disciplines into teachers of Management. This is being achieved primarily through a two-year general MBA program, which not only gives the participants a solid grounding in the wonders of capitalism, but also seeks to introduce "modern methods" - the methods used widely by business schools throughout the world - to the various universities targeted by the program.

We were from the start in sympathy with the view that educational development meant more than changing content, and would ideally mean that participants would be involved in an ongoing discussion with faculty about teaching methodology, about goals and objectives, about evaluation, and about many other aspects of education as well as the principal content of the program. Local language teaching colleagues, however, informed us that the experiential approach we proposed to use "wouldn't work in Vietnam", and urged us to use a method more in keeping with those prevalent in the country (see Denham 1992 for an appraisal of the language situation in Vietnam). So although program participants were in a sense ready for change, in that they were aware of the goals of the program to which they had been accepted, we anticipated some resistance, particularly as many of the technologies the project proposed to use were new to Vietnam. Our language teaching pedagogy was the first of many new technologies students would face.

This paper describes how we used dialogue journals (Peyton 1991) as a technology which allowed us to negotiate our approach with our students, using the case of Mr. Hung - a skeptical learner - as an illustration. Within the context of this case study, I examine Numa Markee's (1986) concept of an appropriate technology model of communicative course design, and argue that the conclusions he draws oversimplify the possibilities open to teachers in educational development projects.

The sociocultural context

Early in 1995, Vietnamese Prime Minister Vo Van Kiet flew to the south of the country in what was widely seen as an attempt to persuade university administrations and faculty in Ho Chi Minh City of the need for nine universities to amalgamate into a huge new multidisciplinary institution, the National University of Ho Chi Minh City. This change will involve the nine universities moving from their inner-city sites to a new campus in Song Be province. The Prime Minister's journey might be regarded as evidence of how seriously the Government is taking the issue of educational reform. The grand scheme of educational change is set out in detail in a document entitled *Education Sector Review and Human Resources Sector Analysis* (MOET 1992), which describes a reform encompassing every aspect of the educational system.

The reform has attracted a great deal of attention from international donor agencies keen to contribute, and several agencies, the Swiss Development Corporation amongst them, identified the development of Management Education as a particularly pressing need in the country. However, we knew from experience that universities are inherently conservative institutions, not known for embracing change readily, and we saw no reason why Vietnamese universities might be any different.

The trainees chosen for the first program had all received their Bachelor degrees in either Engineering or Economics disciplines, often entirely unrelated to the subjects they had been given responsibility to teach. As university lecturers working in departments recently formed or renamed, and struggling with the need to make curricula in universities relevant to the rapidly changing economic realities in Vietnam, participants were keenly aware of the need for change. Many were in fact already using in their courses standard textbooks on Economics, Marketing and Organization Theory, which were often translated for the students' benefit into Vietnamese, complete with examples from economic environments far removed from their own. These texts were being used in the same classrooms with the same meager facilities found throughout the country, circumstances very different to those envisioned by the original authors of those tomes. The prevailing educational ethos was a belief in the conduit model of learning and explicit knowledge, and also a reverence of the teacher, a figure apparently held in higher esteem than the father in the Confucian scheme of things. In addition, the various physical and financial constraints appeared to, and were believed to, militate against the introduction of other curricular structures and educational paradigms.

However, Fullan (1991: 36) makes it clear to us that educational change is multi-dimensional:

Objectively, it is possible to clarify the meaning of educational change by identifying and describing its main dimensions. Ignorance of these dimensions explains a number of interesting phenomena in the field of educational change: for example, why some people accept an innovation they do not understand, why some aspects of a change are implemented, and not others, and why strategies for change neglect certain components.

For Fullan, the dimensions of change are materials, teaching approaches and beliefs, and change involves a dynamic interrelationship of the three dimensions¹. Change inevitably causes anxiety, loss and struggle for those affected once they realize that basic conceptions of education and change are involved - "their occupational identity, sense of competence and their self-respect" (*op.cit.*: 40). Schön (1971) similarly argues that real change involves passing through zones of uncertainty; this uncertainty cannot be pre-empted by planning.

So we took seriously the various signals which we received about our approach, an approach we felt to be consistent with the Management faculties' beliefs in learning-by-doing, and the value, necessity even, of experience to the learning of Business Management. These signals included indications that the kind of language course proposed was not felt to be appropriate in a Vietnamese situation. Members of a faculty of Industrial Management recommended to me on an earlier preparatory mission that we make use of classical poetry if we wanted to motivate participants, implying that they had heard that our approach was not as interesting as a poetry-based course might be.

The course

The course we designed for this program is described in detail elsewhere (Hall & Kenny 1988; Clayton & Shaw 1993), and can be broadly characterized as an experiential, task-based program. In common with "Talkbase", the pre-session language program at the Asian Institute of Technology (AIT), tasks at the beginning of the course tended to be defined more by the teachers, with students taking increasing responsibility as the course progressed for defining the tasks and the content with which they worked. Tasks, complemented by reportbacks, might involve students being in the classroom or out of the classroom, and one key task - the Company Resource Database (see Clayton & Shaw 1993) - involved students being off-campus, collecting data on companies in the city. This work was started in the very first week of the course. Thus, far from being offered reassuringly familiar language-learning activities, participants were confronted from the start with the

need to get out and discover things which we felt were relevant to the world they were about to enter. Educationally, we believed that getting them out of the classroom right from the beginning would send the immediate signal that this would not be a course in which knowledge flowed from teacher to passive student. Methodologically, our course almost certainly stood in sharp contrast to anything participants were likely to have experienced previously.

Probably one of the hardest aspects of the course for participants to get used to was the informality with which teachers and students dealt with each other - a very large element of the interactions from the beginning were negotiations between the various parties to clarify what had to be done, to reassure participants concerning our motives for asking them to make decisions, and to try to ensure that things worked more smoothly the next time. Thus, for example, participants' concerns in the first week led to discussions - generally among sub-groups rather than the group as a whole - concerning whom they might consult on their first task, where they could find information, how they could locate companies, get access to the information, and so forth. Much of this revealed a skepticism about what could be achieved and a need for reassurance. A stronger current of resistance made itself apparent during the participant-teacher consultations we scheduled for Friday afternoons, during which we more explicitly sought their opinions on what we were doing; these consultations revealed a marked preference amongst certain participants for *Streamline English*.

Consultations and dialogue journals: negotiating our approach

We used the technology of dialogue journals principally because this was current practice at AIT. We had not thought too much about their advantages, although had we been asked we might have argued that their use was an effective means of improving fluency and the mechanics of writing (Semke 1984; Ross 1988; Peyton 1990; Reyes 1991). We were not at the time aware of the extensive literature on dialogue journals as a tool for addressing issues of motivation, self-image, expression and personal empowerment (Spack & Sadow 1983; Jackson 1988; Meath-Lang 1990). Vanette & Jurich (1990), for example, have argued that the collaborative use of dialogue journals can transform the traditional roles of teachers and learners in the language classroom. Other practitioners have begun to suggest that journals can be used in program evaluation. Oscarson (1989) proposes that the day-to-day recording of learning experiences in journals makes journals appropriate instruments for self-assessment. Our colleagues Bill Savage and Rick Whisenand (1993) have used logbook entries to track their students' accomplishment of language-learning objectives in an intensive five-day workshop.

The interest in journals has not been confined to language programs. Winer (1992) examines the use of journals in a teacher-training program in tracing the process by which practice and reflection on specific activities change awareness of and attitudes toward the teaching of writing. Similarly, Jarvis (1992) uses journals as a means by which teachers on an in-service training course might reflect on their learning. However, the possibilities of journals as a technology through which educational innovations could be negotiated with learners in a process of educational change had not yet been realized. It is this perspective that I intend to explore in this paper.

On the first day of the course, participants were given an empty notebook with the instruction that they were "to record their ideas and impressions during the eight-week course". Unlike some other practitioner-researchers, we did not assign specific writing tasks, and there was no particular compulsion on participants to write anything at all. The intention was that we would collect the journals regularly and comment on participants' thoughts. The rationale we offered to students who asked was that we believed that the keeping of such a journal would help them to think through their ideas, and that this would improve their writing skills. We made it clear from the beginning that we would not be correcting language in the journals, as we wanted participants to focus solely on content and to take responsibility for their own accuracy. In Peyton's (1990: xi) terms, we did not intend to play the default role of evaluator of students' writing. The extended dialogue between each participant and ourselves was not the result of a conscious decision on our part, but evolved over the early weeks of the course.

A skeptical learner: Mr. Hung

Mr. Hung (name changed), a 38-year-old former statistics teacher at the Ho Chi Minh City University of Economics, struck us from the beginning as a quiet, reflective character who spoke English with a strong, clear, remarkably Oxford accent. However, words needed to be coaxed from his mouth, and although we soon found out that he saw himself as somewhat reserved, we attributed this early on to his skepticism. This did not manifest itself immediately in the journals, which he used initially for notes on various activities, but in the consultations; although Hung was less conservative than some of his colleagues, he expressed doubts about his ability to use language in the way we had asked him to, and argued that he needed to learn by heart - "the only way to learn a language". However, whatever doubts he entertained about the usefulness of the approach for learning a language, he soon started to reflect on the nature of what we were doing and its broader applicability:

Hung: I'm thinking about your method. I've worked as a teacher for 13 years. I've learned by heart the course I teach. In my classes, I work almost - it makes my students passive, and they feel so tired because they have to write so much. They don't have time to think...In future, I will apply your method into my work. I think after introducing my students generally what they have to do, I'll divide them in to groups. And I'll ask these groups to prepare in detail their work to represent to class. This will make my students more actively and they can understand the subject clearly. (*Beginning of Week 2*)

Despite such encouraging comments, we were well aware that many of the participants harbored doubts about what we were trying to do. Such doubts focused on an insecurity engendered by our asking participants to do real things with language, rather than reassuringly integral exercises.

Hung: It seems that you overestimate our English. Sometimes you speak with us as with the Americans. In the class, although I always try to listen to you, I still misunderstand you many times.

Tan²: It's interesting the text analysis sessions have helped you so much with critical reading. More practice will, I am sure, develop your ability to become an efficient reader. Do Jon and Terry overestimate your English or do you underestimate?

Terry: So is your problem getting any clearer? I think so. It's a very natural and a necessary process. A good process. Keep going...

Hung's comments reflect his concern at having to talk and make mistakes; this concern is more easily handled in journals. As has been noted elsewhere (Shaw & Clayton 1994), the quality of the teachers' responses is crucial to the effectiveness of journals as a technology. Hung's concerns were real, and demanded an authentic response from ourselves. In response to the remarks with which this paper begins, we replied:

Terry: Hung, your comments are so interesting, so insightful, that I really wish you would write more often. Jon's going to comment on some particular points of what you've said, so I will leave these aspects to him. What I want to comment on in particular is your remark about your "mistake" about "dogfood". First of all, how would you ever learn that your particular way of expressing that notion was an error (not a mistake) unless you expressed it? My clarification was a form of correction. Miss Lan had a similar experience. She was upset once when I wrote that she was more "talkative" in a small group. She thought that "talkative" had a negative connotation, which it can have in a particular context. The point is, she talked to me about

it and so came to deepen her understanding of that particular word and its usage. I could tell you a dozen stories of errors I have made in Thai. The fact is that I have learned quite a lot of Thai by making errors. Personally, I enjoy the laugh it gets from native Thai speakers and I can get more laughs telling the story to other people later on. Language can be a lot of fun that way. Sometimes I make the error on purpose just for the reaction I know I will get. If you want to accelerate your progress in learning English, allow yourself to make more errors.

Jon: Hung - I'm not sure if there is a correlation between what we have to say, and the number of words we need to say it. It seems anomalous to me that an "introvert" should feel compelled to practice - if we do not want to speak our own language, why speak in English? The poverty of practice. In fact, there is a huge amount of evidence to suggest that the kind of practice favored here does not help - it is only useful when meaningful communication takes place. Terry is right about mistakes - we have to make them. But I also see how hard it is when faced with one's own students. Your solution to this is to learn by heart - but your presentation yesterday indicated a flexibility which belied the claim that you had "learnt by heart".

Different opinions - what do you think about my opinion that this program is about education, knowledge and power?

Could this program use different techniques to minimize the problems of old teacher Hung, standing in front of former students, scared to make mistakes?

Hung's final entry consisted of nine pages of critique of various pedagogical aspects of the course. The following excerpt is typical:

Hung: About the role of the teacher in learning, I agree with the method of Talkbase very much. The teacher only should supply some base materials, the learners will use the house to build the houses in their own opinion...the quality and beauty of the house depends on the learner's ability.

Once some of my students asked me why they had to learn subjects they rarely used in reality as algebra, analysis, probability. I answered them that not all things supplied at university can be used directly in reality. University supplied mainly the methodology to students - the way you examine the facts, the way you found out the problems, the way you solve the problems. You could never use the mathematical tools as differential, integral in your life, but the way you thought, the way you worked must be more logical than

the person who knew nothing about mathematics. But how does teacher equip his students the methodology efficiently?

Communicative course design and appropriate technology

In 1986 Numa Markee, recognizing that development and English for Specific Purposes (ESP) shared common interests and concerns, laid the groundwork for the development of an "appropriate technology" (AT) model of communicative course design. Rightly identifying appropriateness as a socio-cultural aspect of innovation, his model places the issue of cultural appropriateness of different technologies on a cline, as shown in Figure 1 below:

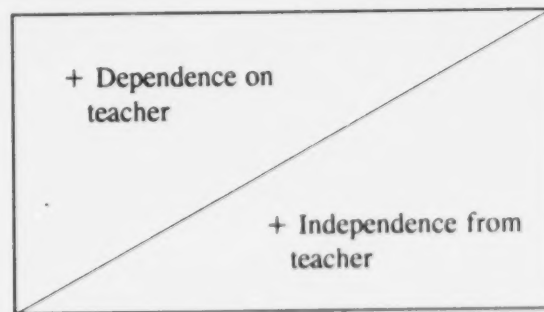


Figure 1: The cultural appropriateness of different technologies cline (Markee 1986: 170)

This representation of his idea leads him to conclude (*op.cit.* : 170) that, in designing language courses, we should "initially choose technologies that roughly correspond to the learners' current level of educational dependence or independence". Depending on the circumstances, this might mean engaging the learners in rote-learning, grammar-translation or mother-tongue groupwork, all the while progressing towards approaches which the teacher herself believes in. Markee approvingly quotes Freire, who argues that education should be liberating. The problem with this understanding proposal for course design is that it is almost certainly dependent upon the ability of teachers to move students beyond rote-learning and other (intermediate?) technologies towards learning experiences which liberate them. In other words, the crucial question of *how* we move along the cline is not answered. This question is crucial precisely because the movement proposed involves educational change, and therefore resistance can be anticipated. If, as we know to be the case, all change involves loss, anxiety and struggle (Fullan 1991: 31), it is not clear whether postponing change is beneficial, and, if indeed it is, in what ways.

Markee validates his conclusions by reference to his experience in Sudan. Having sought to introduce groupwork in ESP classes in Khartoum Polytechnic, and met with limited success, he reverted to methodological forms with which his students were more familiar. Once he had then established his credentials, he was able to gradually introduce pedagogies less reliant on teacher dominance. Thus a culturally-appropriate technology allowed him to establish his expertise. However, it is possible that other means might have achieved the same end, and might have allowed the introduction of less teacher-dominated pedagogies sooner - for example, with northern Sudanese students, a manifested interest in learning Arabic or a curiosity about Islam.

Markee proceeds from a definition of technology by Stewart (1977: 1), who argued that technology is too often solely identified with the hardware of production and proposed a much broader definition, extending to:

all the skills, knowledge and procedures for making, using and doing useful things. Technology thus includes methods used in non-marketed activities as well as marketed ones. It includes the nature and specifications of what is produced - the product design - as well as how it is produced. It encompasses management and marketing techniques, as well as techniques involved directly in production. Technology extends to services - education, banking and the law, for example - as well as to manufacturing and agriculture.

This definition is broad enough to allow almost any device, idea or method to be understood as a technology. Thus, ESP can be seen as a technology, as can the use of the students' mother tongue in the classroom and various methodological approaches.

Markee's discussion of the implications of defining ESP in terms of technology is dependent on his understanding of ESP as a language-planning solution, in which the key issue is that of language program maintenance. Many ESP programs do fit this understanding. However, there are also development situations in which teachers are *not* engaged in developing programs to be sustained by local teachers after the departure of expatriate program developers, but are faced with language-planning decisions at the course level. For example, we are currently developing a two-week preparatory course for a one-month disaster mitigation course. Participants on this course will come from both "outer circle" and "expanding circle" countries (Kachru 1990), and the preparatory course aims to enable participants from the latter to interact more readily inside and outside the classroom with the former group and with course faculty. This is surely an ESP situation *par excellence*, but it would fall outside the scope of Markee's definition of ESP. An appropriate

technology model of course design should be able to account for situations such as this.

Savage (1992) rightly argues that Markee's definition stems from his giving priority to only one element of AT, that of technological intermediateness, to the exclusion of other principles such as alternativeness, innovativeness and self-reliance. He therefore seeks to extend the scope of Markee's proposed AT model to include sustainable language learning, with a focus on enabling students to become autonomous learners. Like Markee's model, however, Savage's proposal to shift the emphasis towards self-reliance seems most applicable to the kind of context with which the author is most familiar - development situations in which donor agencies expect a two-week intensive language fix to do the trick.

Diffusion of innovations and appropriate technology

A more productive angle might be to adopt definitions from the literature of diffusion of innovations, an angle which Markee has taken up in more recent papers (1993, 1994). Rogers (1983: 11) defines an innovation as "an idea, practice or object that is perceived to be new by an individual or other unit of adoption...If the idea seems new to an individual, it is an innovation". For Rogers, innovation is virtually synonymous with technology, which he defines (*op.cit.*: 12) as "a design for instrumental action that reduces the uncertainty in the cause-effect relationships involved in achieving a desired outcome". Like Markee, Rogers sees technology as comprising both hardware and software aspects, with many innovations in fields such as management and education consisting often exclusively of software.

Diffusion is the "process by which an innovation is communicated through certain channels over time among the members of a social system" (Rogers 1983: 5); by *communication*, he understands "a two-way process of convergence, or divergence, as two or more individuals exchange information in order to move toward each other (or apart) in the meanings they ascribe to certain events" (*ibid.*).

These definitions allow us to evolve a different understanding of technology and its appropriateness to a situation. The relevant questions now become:

- What are the ideas, practices or objects perceived to be new?
- Which individuals or groups are the units of adoption?
- Which channels are appropriate for communicating the innovation to those individuals?

In most development situations, the answers to these questions will be multi-dimensional. For example, in the Vietnamese project, the ideas, practices and objects which were perceived as new were not only English language, but also the unfamiliar hardware and software of different pedagogies. These were communicated in the first instance to our students, who would then seek to adapt them for their own environments. We believed that the innovations we were trying to introduce could not be communicated by pedagogies with which students were already familiar, such as a conduit model of learning.

A constellation of technologies

Our model, then, is one of a *constellation* of technologies, working within a socio-cultural context. The curriculum itself is the principal technology. However, this technology comprises other technologies, interacting dynamically with each other. Some of these technologies will serve as means by which the educational process is negotiated with the students; such "negotiating technologies" are in no sense less equal than other technologies that comprise the whole - indeed, without them the whole curriculum will probably fail.

In the course in Vietnam, the negotiating technologies were the dialogue journal, the weekly consultations and - possibly - the social life through which these dialogues were continued after hours with students such as Hung, sometimes with beer, most often over food. The Vietnamese are a very social people; for them the building of relationships is of critical importance in any transaction, and the traditionally long lunchbreak is often used for forging relationships. The emphasis on top-down conduit models of learning comes from another tradition, Confucian. The relationship between students and teachers is traditionally built on respect. In the class, respect emanates from the teacher's expertise, measured in terms of knowledge. But as we sought to change this view we also sought to gain participants' respect in other ways - through hard work and a willingness to discuss why we did what we did.

Our negotiating technologies interacted with the other technologies we chose to utilize in our course design: an understanding of knowledge as socially-constructed, the "field-problem-solution" paradigm, the journal article library, investigative research, reportbacks, the database of companies in Ho Chi Minh City, and so on. Our timetable, which tended to evolve throughout the course, was a technology which represented the technologies of our course in terms of days and weeks. The socio-cultural context of this course was the still-to-be-defined curriculum of the 12-month Management Development program, the cultures of the partner universities,

the pedagogical and political culture of higher education and Ho Chi Minh City.

Finally, Hung on the socio-cultural context of using this particular technology in Vietnamese universities:

I've even asked Mrs. My about applying such logbooks for Vietnamese students. She says that it is very difficult because she has hundreds students a year, so she can't read all their logbooks every week. I see it takes you a lot of time for reading and answering in our logbook. If all of us write as much as Mr. Tin, logbooks become a real hard work for you, or logbook is not necessary for us to practice writing.

In other words, in a different socio-cultural and technological context, different technologies will be necessary. An example of such a technology might be the computer-networking Chun (1994) used to facilitate the acquisition of interactive competence with first-year foreign language learners. A further example might be Markee's (1994) use of e-mail with teaching assistants.

Notes

1. Teaching approaches might be too limiting a term here, because the envisioned educational change sought to transform the role of teachers within the university: participants were to become researchers (research in Management being relatively less dependent on funding) and consultants, and these activities would inform the Vietnam-specific curricula which faculty would develop.
2. Tan was one of three Vietnamese teachers who worked with us part-time. The times at which Tan was able to work with us meant that he spent much of his time reading and responding to journals, and talking to us about what he was doing and saying.

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"They've got a problem with English": perceptions of the difficulties of international postgraduate students

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***Abstract:** This paper explores the common perception that "language" is the cause of the academic difficulties of international students in English-medium postgraduate education. Adjustment problems and longer completion times are often ascribed to a low level of English proficiency. A common view is that if language entry requirements were to be raised or remedial English language support provided, the problem would be solved. Over the last eight years, the National Centre for Development Studies (NCDS) at the Australian National University has changed its approach to language and academic support for its students, both international and local. A discipline-specific genre-based approach, which takes into account the broader cultural contexts of the institution and the specific cultural context of the discipline, has replaced the "remedial English" approach. This new approach has proved beneficial for both teachers and students. The paper examines the issues and problems which have arisen in its implementation. Finally, the academic and institutional implications are outlined.*

Introduction

The purpose of this paper is to explore the common perception on the part of institutions, academic staff and scholarship donors that an inadequate grasp of English is the major cause of the academic difficulties experienced by international postgraduate students in English-medium educational institutions. It examines the response of the National Centre for Development Studies (NCDS) at the Australian National University (ANU) to issues of language proficiency and student performance. The paper begins with a consideration of the reasons for exploring these issues, and then goes on to review the language and academic skills programs at NCDS, with particular reference to the changes that have occurred and the obstacles encountered. A final section outlines the implications of the findings for institutions, for language testing, for research and for the process of educational development.

The paper draws on the experience of NCDS in providing programs for over 250 graduate students each year, mostly from Asia, Africa and the Pacific, but also with an increasing proportion of Australian first- and second-language English speakers. Four programs are offered at Graduate Diploma, Masters and PhD levels: Demography, Development Administration, Economics of Development, and Environmental Management for Development. Each has its own combination of coursework and thesis requirements. The Centre, established in the 1970s and currently with core funding from the Australian Agency for International Development (AusAID), has the largest population of international postgraduate students at the ANU. Of this group, some students have undertaken language training as a pre-requisite to selection; others whose English language proficiency is deemed to be satisfactory have not. Generally speaking, those students whose first language is English or whose undergraduate degree was in the English medium are not tested for language proficiency. Australian citizens from non-English-speaking backgrounds (NESB) are sometimes tested if they have not been in the country long, but language entry criteria for this group do not exist.

Two propositions are addressed in this paper. The first is that, for postgraduate students, there is no correlation between language test scores used for admission purposes and academic results. The second proposition is that a focused discipline-specific academic skills program is an effective solution to the problems faced by the majority of international postgraduate students because it more effectively targets the areas of unclear expectations and cultural differences. The expression *cultural differences* is used to refer to a variety of differences which may occur in many contexts: those entailed in the transfer from one country to another; one education system to another; one institution to another; one discipline to another; or one academic level to another. By implication, discipline-based academic skills programs will also benefit students whose first language is English; they too experience "cultural change" in embarking on postgraduate study. The paper argues that the academic skills courses are not "support" programs; the term *support* implies that they are not central and that the main game is elsewhere. Our contention is that these programs are fundamental to the teaching and supervision which must occur in an explicit way at graduate level if both students and teachers are to achieve their goals in the teaching-learning process. In the absence of these discipline-based academic skills programs, institutions have no choice but to fall back on the tangible evidence of a student's past performance (academic record and language test scores) as a way of lessening the frustrations for both students and teachers.

A flexible approach to language entry requirements

Studies on the correlation between English language proficiency and academic success are inconclusive. Graham (1987) has provided a useful summary of those studies conducted. Particularly in the case of graduate students, English language proficiency appears to be only one of a number of factors determining whether international students succeed in their studies; other factors might include country of origin, first language, area of specialisation, and attitude to learning. Her conclusion is that, while "it seems likely that there is a minimal level of English proficiency required before other factors assume more importance" (*art. cit.*: 515), at the same time, "what that minimal level is will almost certainly vary from institution to institution and, indeed, from program to program" (p.517). She recommends that each institution conduct its 'own investigation of appropriate scores and entry requirements; and suggests that, among other considerations, requirements might be adapted in accordance with the services available to students once they begin their studies.

Students seeking admission to NCDS have a lower Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) or International English Language Testing System (IELTS) test score requirement than for the ANU as a whole, on the grounds that academic skills staff are employed in each of the programs. The NCDS requirements are 500 TOEFL with a Test of Written English (TWE) score of 4.5, or overall Band 6.0 IELTS with a minimum of 6 in Writing, a minimum of 5.0 on only one of Listening, Speaking or Reading, and a minimum of 5.5 on the remaining sub-tests. Even though these lower levels apply, there are still cases which need to be argued on an individual basis in order to admit students who do not meet these requirements. Sometimes language test scores are not available, time or funding constraints exist, or test scores may not match what is otherwise known of an applicant's likelihood of success. This process of arguing each case is often time-consuming and laborious; however, experience has shown it to be an effective mechanism, and most of the students accepted through this process have proved capable of succeeding. In our estimation, the importance of factors other than language proficiency is very much underrated, and it cannot be assumed that any student entering NCDS has all the academic and research as well as the language skills required in order to complete sustained independent research.

Two sides to the teaching-learning equation

Once students are admitted to their programs of study, the general attitude in higher education institutions seems to be that they are responsible for their own success. If they have been accepted, it is expected that they should have the skills and ability to succeed. Most students at NCDS are already professionals in their own countries, working in research or teaching institutions or the bureaucracy. They are highly motivated, often by the need to succeed in order to maintain their professional positions at home or to obtain promotions. For many, the time spent away in Australia is somewhat risky - they may be replaced by others in situations of intense competition for high-status jobs, they may have left their partners and children in uncertain circumstances, and they may not feel confident that the risk is worthwhile. For many the experience is an adventure and a challenge; for others it is a difficult process. Against this background, the professional who has now become a student also needs to adapt to the new academic culture where the rules are often unclear. For most, even those whose first language is English, difficulties emerge in making the transition from one academic culture to another: from undergraduate to postgraduate; from being a researcher or teacher to being a student; from being someone who knows and makes the rules to being someone who has to find out what they are. The process of learning by trial and error is time-consuming, costly and unprofessional.

There are two sides to the teaching-learning equation. It is often easier to focus on the students as being those who are seen to benefit from the educational opportunity and to assume that, if the teaching-learning process does not proceed smoothly, the problem must lie with them. Students' academic difficulties manifest themselves in a number of ways. They may obtain erratic grades in coursework assessment, have difficulty in meeting deadlines, miss appointments and classes, develop writer's block, lack "initiative", withdraw from interaction, suffer minor health problems or stress symptoms, and be unable to complete their thesis within the allotted time. Supervisors often complain that students do not appear to understand and act on what has been discussed with them, and express disappointment that they are not living up to expectations in terms of academic performance. A common course of action is to refer the student to a Study Skills Adviser or in some cases to a personal counsellor or social worker. In the case of international students the difficulty may be diagnosed as a "problem with English" and short-term remedial tutoring arranged. When funding allows, students may be required to interrupt their studies in order to undertake an extra period of intensive language training at another institution. These solutions entail extra costs for the individuals, for the institutions and for the funding agencies.

The other side of the teaching-learning equation, however, is the teaching and supervision side. Graduate students experience difficulties in adapting to new expectations; academic staff likewise experience difficulties in teaching and supervising graduate students who have different backgrounds and needs. Research students who are engaged in working on thesis proposals, consulting with supervisors, reading, but not writing or presenting themselves in a more public forum, can have difficulties which go unnoticed for many months, surfacing only when they present their first seminar after six months or so, or when the first chapters of the thesis are read by the supervisory panel. In some cases, it is only when the draft of the entire thesis is subjected to scrutiny that the full extent of the problem becomes obvious. Valuable time is often lost and suddenly the student becomes the focus of attention. Most supervisors have had some experience of this kind of drama. Many will openly admit that they have felt obliged to help students out by contributing more to a thesis than they would have liked, but feel that there is no choice: it is hard to fail a student after two years or within months of expected completion.

This would seem to imply that at some level academic staff consider that it is not the fault of the student, and that they feel frustrated and powerless to help with the difficulties students are facing. Part of the problem may lie with the training that academics themselves receive. In Australia the PhD, a research degree, is generally considered a sufficient qualification for teaching in a university. The introduction of coursework in certain graduate programs means that academics are now involved in determining assessment, often with very little experience of establishing assessment criteria. This can become a frustrating and time-consuming process of trial and error for both teachers and students.

At the ANU many academic staff have expressed concern about the international students in their classes or under their supervision. Seminars and workshops have been organised to provide support for academic staff who work with international students; however, these have not been well attended. Academic staff, too, are under pressure and many find the extra demands onerous. In calculating academic workloads no allowance is made for the extra time and effort required for students who do not share the lecturer's cultural background. The support provided by the ANU Study Skills Centre is invaluable; however, as both students and staff increasingly recognise the benefits to be gained through consultation with the Graduate School Adviser, resources are becoming more stretched. The brief for Study Skills Centres such as this one is extremely broad, with disparate needs to be met without the advantage of the continuity of a discipline focus.

As a response to the complaints of staff about overseas students' writing skills, the TESOL Centre at the University of Canberra carried out a survey of what

academic staff thought to be most important in work submitted by international students. The study revealed that the level of tolerance of linguistic error seems to have risen, and that staff valued "ability to communicate knowledge more than the other traditional academic conventions" (*Canberra Times* 1994). This survey gives additional support to the view that a focus on language alone is too narrow.

Language entry requirements: further issues

These difficulties between international students and their lecturers and supervisors have repercussions at an institutional level. Faced with the need to maintain the reputation of the institution, the gatekeepers direct their concern toward their main area of responsibility: entry requirements. Apart from the required academic qualifications, the main tangible entry requirement is an indication of language proficiency, usually a language test score. The first reaction has been to increase the language requirement: to add a compulsory TWE score in the case of TOEFL, to require a Graduate Record Examination (GRE) score, or to stipulate minimum sub-test requirements in the case of IELTS. In our experience, these language entry requirements are rigidly applied, even in the face of recommendations by the test originators that they not be strictly used to determine whether students will succeed academically; and it is difficult to obtain entry for students who fall below the cut-off points, even when evidence of academic ability (and, sometimes, other second language ability) exists. The trend appears to be to place more emphasis on language proficiency rather than to take into account the other factors which have been shown to be important.

A related but complicating issue at ANU is that language tests are not uniformly required for all NESB students. Applicants from African countries, India and the Pacific Islands are not generally required to provide a language test score, on the grounds that English was the medium of instruction for their first degree. Such being the rationale, Bangladeshi students ought also to be granted exemption, which is not the case. Although the IELTS scores of Bangladeshis are often below the level required for entry, this reflects not so much a poor level of language proficiency as inadequate testing infrastructure and conditions. If these tests are perceived as being useful predictors of academic success, then they ought to be applied uniformly. Their use has been perceived as discriminatory by some applicants who observe that many of those students who are deemed by institutional gatekeepers to have adequate English language skills experience as many difficulties in performing their academic tasks as those who are required to undergo testing. Students from Papua New Guinea, for example, often have difficulties with register, using colloquial

language inappropriate to an academic context; those from African countries, on the other hand, often use a very formal and legalistic English, just as inappropriate for modern academic communication. All groups are likely to have difficulties in ascertaining the expectations of the discipline in terms of written and spoken genres specific to that discipline.

Language and academic skills programs at NCDS

Each of the programs at NCDS employs academic skills staff at Associate Lecturer level. These staff are responsible for organising and implementing programs specific to the disciplines in which they teach. When academic skills positions were first advertised (as remedial language support positions) in the late 1980s, the main concern was with "English". It seemed that academic staff directed their frustration at "language"; if both grammatical and generic problems were present in students' work, it was easier to focus on the grammar than on identifying the specific generic characteristics that were absent or inappropriate. This may be because academic staff themselves learned to use genres by "osmosis" rather than by being made explicitly aware of their characteristics through a process of modelling.

Academic skills programs are not English language programs, although they necessarily involve discussions of language issues. Their theoretical basis is an extension of the work of educational linguists who believe that genre provides a better starting-point than grammar for relating education and language (for an overview, see Hammond 1987; for more detail on the theory of academic skills programs, see May *et al.* forthcoming). Teaching about genres means teaching explicitly the features of the academic spoken and written genres that students are required to use. Often this means clarifying with lecturers and supervisors exactly what they *do* expect. In many cases, without this kind of clarification, lecturers cannot convey their expectations except in relation to what students produce in response to assessment tasks.

Academic skills programs begin with preparatory courses before students enrol. These focus on general preparation for graduate study: library and research skills, computing, conventions for writing, seminar presentation skills, cross-cultural communication and a range of personal adjustment areas. Our observation over several years has been that the students who have most difficulty in meeting postgraduate academic expectations of genre, argument and logic, research and documentation of the research process, have been those international and Australian students who have missed the preparatory courses.

Once students have formally begun their courses, weekly classes in academic skills are held in each program with an explicit focus on critical analysis, research skills, writing and seminars skills. In addition, individual and small-group consultations are scheduled. Academic skills staff, together with lecturers and supervisors, provide feedback on assessed written work and seminars at all stages. Workshops are held for PhD students, and PhD thesis chapters are submitted early to academic skills staff for comment to avoid the need for last-minute editing and the temptation to write the thesis for a student. The feedback given covers the range of genres and their characteristics, and the appropriate language for communicating in the discipline. In many cases this involves prior analysis of these genres and identifying what lecturers expect from students. Some units are now given names reflecting the genres with which they are concerned, allowing an explicit focus on generic characteristics: Research Seminar, Research Project and Case Study are some examples in Masters courses.

One significant result of this process has been a systematic approach to the development of skills across the various units taken. Assessment tasks have been coordinated to progress from less complex to more complex tasks; for example, Seminar Presentation begins with short presentations in Graduate Diploma units, leading up to 70-minute seminars by the end of Masters courses and 90-minute PhD seminars; a similar structure exists for reviews of articles, books and the literature on a broad topic. Because academic skills staff have both language teaching qualifications and qualifications in the discipline in which they work, or in a closely-related field, and because they are not usually involved in formal assessment of students, they are in a position to be intermediaries in the process of systematising and clarifying expectations. They are mediators, teachers, facilitators, counsellors and advocates, often perceiving needs and filling gaps, with a rare overview of all students and their courses.

Academic skills: case studies

It has not been possible to correlate language entry scores with academic success on any statistical basis because of a lack of appropriate data. However, it is useful to look more closely at the experience of individuals in order to see how language proficiency might have affected their academic performance and to illustrate the need for flexibility in applying cut-off points. Three types of experience are considered here: first, the case of students admitted with language scores which were not considered satisfactory; second, those who did not succeed in their study and either did not proceed from Graduate Diploma to Masters or withdrew without

completing the Graduate Diploma; and third, those who were in danger of failing but did not.

T., an Indonesian, was admitted to the Graduate Diploma in Demography with a TOEFL score of 487, before rigid cut-off points were applied, because she worked in a population-related area and was familiar with population issues. She had a great deal of trouble with writing but a strong grasp of concepts. Now, having written a good Masters thesis, T. is mid-way through a PhD. Her use of English has consistently improved, and although she still has difficulties at times with discipline-specific terminology, her written and spoken English are not an obstacle to progress. The skills she has acquired will be of great benefit to her organisation when she returns to her country.

Three Vietnamese students were admitted as special cases to the Environmental Management for Development program with band 5.0 on the IELTS. They had had difficulties with language study and testing in Vietnam and had taken the wrong IELTS module for their course of study. They were given a six-month English bridging course at NCDS. At the request of the students, who were bored doing only bridging studies, they were allowed to enrol in the Graduate Diploma units as non-award students. The students completed all the assessments and obtained distinctions in all three units. NCDS argued that they should be awarded the Graduate Diploma retroactively; this was agreed on a "never again" basis. All three completed their Masters degrees with distinctions and high distinctions. These three all had Russian as a second language and developing English language proficiency was only a matter of time.

K., an employee of the National Statistics Office of Lao PDR, came to Australia for one year's pre-course English with an IELTS bandscore of 4.5. By the end of the year, her score had still not reached the required 6.0. She attended the preparatory course for Demography and then undertook a further semester of English training at a language centre. She was admitted to the Demography program with a bare 6.0, but there were doubts about her ability to cope. Her overall first-semester mark was 72, and at the time of writing, she is coping well. With training in Demography to complement her statistical background, her skills will be much in demand. Lao PDR, with very few trained demographers, is currently conducting its first population census. Training in demography, therefore, is much more of a priority for a student such as T. than spending more time becoming proficient in English.

In the Demography Program, the majority of those who have not been allowed to progress from Graduate Diploma to Masters have been from the Pacific Island

nations, and therefore have not been required to submit a language proficiency test score in order to be admitted. Indeed, having a language test score would not have helped in any case: their difficulties resulted from a lack of analytical and critical skills and a poor quantitative background, and even with extra classes in quantitative subjects and help with the acquisition of academic and research skills, the task of making up ground was too great.

R., from a Pacific Island nation, had completed a Masters degree from an American University and enrolled in a Masters in Development Administration. He assumed that the learning culture in Australia would be the same as in the United States. However, he was unable to develop a conceptual framework for his research, which was descriptive rather than analytical, and was unable to carry out independent library research. R. certainly had problems with grammar, but these were completely overshadowed by his inability to adjust to the demands and expectations of his course. Eventually he withdrew without completing the Masters requirements, but was accepted for a PhD at another university.

S., from a research institute in Indonesia, was admitted with an IELTS bandscore below 6.0 because his institute regarded him as a promising candidate and his need for training was urgent. S. struggled in Australia and did not achieve well. His writing difficulties did not improve with remedial language tutoring. Eventually, two discoveries were made which transformed his last few months. First, his eyes were re-tested and his spectacles changed. At last he could see! Secondly, he revealed during a consultation that he believed that in Australia a student was expected to be independent, and should not consult lecturers or work together with other students. He had been struggling without seeking assistance and without the benefit of the support which most students gain from their peers. Since his return to Indonesia, S. has made a valuable contribution to the research of his institute.

The risk of failure seems to arise in three particular situations. First, students who have transferred from one discipline to another with different requirements in relation to genre and quantitative skills, and who have not attended the preparatory course, often experience serious problems. In particular, students who have previously studied in English-medium institutions often assume that they have no need for academic skills classes. Secondly, international students who miss the discipline-specific preparatory course are often not equipped to operate in the academic culture and are left out of the new student support networks. Finally, some Australian students assume they do not have the same needs as international students; often they do not attend the preparatory course and academic skills classes and can not then understand why the standard of their work is unacceptable.

In 1989, Graduate Diploma students in Demography were required to write a critical review essay. Of the 20 students in that intake, three were Australians. At that stage academic skills classes were not a requirement for all students, and only those who felt they needed help would attend, mostly international students. In this case the academic skills class examined what was meant by a critical review essay, focussing on each of the terms *critical*, *review* and *essay*, using a model provided by the lecturer. When the essay was graded the three Australian students received the three lowest marks and began attending classes thereafter!

Implications

If language proficiency test scores cannot predict an international graduate student's academic success, and if discipline-based academic skills programs are an effective way of making clear to all students the expectations of the discipline in a particular academic community, what then are the implications?

For institutions, there is a need to examine both the question of flexibility in entry to graduate courses and the issue of funding for discipline-based academic skills courses within graduate programs. The financial gain to universities from the fees of international students must be reciprocated with appropriate teaching (AVCC 1988). The damage to institutions from word-of-mouth reports of bad teaching and supervision as well as the extreme cases of universities being sued for poor academic preparation can be avoided. The increasing number of academic skills courses at Australian universities is cause for optimism in this regard.

One way of encouraging flexibility in entry requirements for graduate courses is to build up a more comprehensive profile of graduate applicants, with academic background and relevant professional experience as important elements, keeping in mind that graduate students may be entering a new discipline or interdisciplinary field. A language proficiency test score would be one among a range of other elements, with a minimum required level set by professionals - both academic and administrative - within the institution, but open to negotiation where appropriate. The profile might also include research proposals, tests of quantitative skills, reports of interviews, references from professionals, and discipline-specific tests of writing, comprehension and ability to construct an argument. The important point is that a language proficiency test score should not automatically take precedence in ruling out admission where other evidence shows the applicant to be capable. At postgraduate level students are often known to the destination institution, if not personally then by institutional association, and such a hard-line approach may not be warranted.

Without academic skills courses, however, this flexibility would be likely to have negative consequences.

The introduction of discipline-based academic skills programs has far-reaching **educational implications**. It avoids the "deficit" view of a remedial approach to the differences in background of graduate students, allowing a clear focus on communication within a discipline and on the genres of that discipline. It encourages closer links to develop between graduate students and their supervisors and lecturers, which leads to earlier identification of difficulties and less need for course extensions, and it minimises communication problems and the mismatch of expectations. Because there is a clear focus on the language of the discipline, students can benefit from preparatory and bridging courses throughout the duration of their program of study. Such courses provide a basis for students to gain the professional skills they need, with a solid foundation for research and the communication of their ideas. An important aspect which should not be overlooked is that the provision of academic skills courses removes the artificial distinction often made between local and international students, and encourages cooperation together with an acknowledgment of the common challenges that both groups face.

What are the **implications for language training and testing**? Language proficiency still remains an important consideration in admitting students to graduate programs if graduate study is to be a positive experience for all concerned. However, efforts need to be made to ensure that test scores are a genuine reflection of students' proficiency. Improving the testing infrastructure in countries of origin remains a priority: providing practice materials and information on the nature of the test and notifying students of their test dates well in advance will enable them to prepare adequately so that tests may offer a more accurate measure of proficiency. The variability in testing conditions in particular countries needs to be taken into account by those responsible for selection. Furthermore, if language skills *per se* are not enough to guarantee academic success, more effort needs to be made to provide students with the other skills they require both before they leave their own countries and before they begin to be assessed in their courses. This means that at least part of the preparatory training is often better carried out in the context in which the study will take place, in order to be able to focus on the specific "cultural" differences which could become a problem.

These propositions also have **implications for research**. Each institution needs to examine further the success of existing discipline-based academic skills programs to ascertain how much they can contribute to improving student performance and to enable each graduate program to determine its own entry requirements. Within programs there needs to be an investigation into the appropriate content and form

for academic skills for the discipline. Where records exist, a study of the correlation between language proficiency tests and academic results of both local and international students will provide the confidence to proceed in placing an appropriate emphasis on language proficiency. In particular, an examination of where the process fails is enlightening. Why do particular students fail? Why are particular groups of students having specific difficulties? At what stage do problems occur? What is the most appropriate way to equip students and academic staff for graduate courses?

Conclusion

The broad context for this discussion is the development assistance process. If development assistance in education is to be effective, it has to be seen to be making a difference - and, moreover, a positive one! Building international links between individuals and institutions is part of this process. If we do not make explicit the principles underlying the academic research cultures in our institutions, and merely provide "bandaid" support for international graduate students, these students will have experiences which will undermine their personal and professional skills rather than enhance them. If we do not pay serious attention to ensuring that students have a chance of completing their courses within the allotted time, we may be wasting development assistance resources and creating further difficulties for individuals. If we make language proficiency the main screening mechanism for admitting international students to graduate courses, we are in effect saying that it is more important for students to be proficient in English than for professionals from developing countries to have the access to further training that will benefit their home countries.

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How critical is critical thinking?

A generic issue for language in development

Brigid Ballard

Abstract: The expectation that students will develop the attitude and skills necessary for critical thinking is basic to most western university education. Such thinking informs the way students study texts, undertake practical work and design experimental research, participate in seminars and discussions, and respond to academic staff and project advisers. It is also a crucial factor in the transfer of newly acquired skills, knowledge and technologies to meet the broader needs of national development. Yet while the capacity for critical thinking is universal across cultures, its appropriateness and its mode of expression are strongly influenced by the specific culture and context in which it takes place.

Although most English language centres now include training to prepare students for the academic skills they will need in a western tertiary institution, these programs are necessarily limited by the aims and context of the EFL classroom. Rather than attempting to develop critical thinking through working with highly generalised materials, it is argued that language teachers should initially concentrate on helping students recognise the nature of critical thinking through close analysis of the discourse of academic journals in their own fields of specialisation. By moving from recognition to reproduction of the formal discourse of critical thinking, the students will have a firm basis for the subsequent generation and production of their own critical thinking in the context of a specific discipline or development project.

In western universities a high premium is placed on a student's capacity to think critically and to present, both orally and in writing, an argument which leads persuasively to a conclusion derived from such critical analysis. This expectation poses a major problem for teachers providing pre-departure training in English, for it goes beyond the provision of generalist language competence in the nature both of the communicative intention and of the content of that communication.

It can be argued that critical thinking is a generic intellectual function, involving both a skill and an attitude of mind, what McPeck (1981) usefully terms "reflective scepticism". In this general sense, critical thinking is not restricted to particular cultures, activities or levels of education. It is inherent in many daily decisions

and in most major decisions made by individuals and groups in all societies. Yet, as McPeck (*op. cit.*) also emphasises, thinking is always embedded in context and all thinking necessarily involves thinking "about something" and that "something" in turn necessarily entails a context. What this means in an academic context is that the critical analysis that takes place and the consequent evaluations and conclusions that emerge from such thinking must be situated within the formal discourse of a particular discipline or set of disciplines. And yet again, we need to recognise that this behaviour is culturally shaped: by the cultural appropriateness of the objects of critical thinking; by the public contexts in which such thinking can be undertaken; and by the culturally acceptable modes of expressing this thinking. Although there is a wealth of literature about teaching critical thinking at university (for example, Scriven 1976; McPeck 1981; Haynes 1987; Girle 1989; Mackenzie 1991; and Cadman & Grey 1994), little of it even recognises this cultural dimension, much less considers cross-cultural issues.

The following discussion is based on certain assumptions and definitions. The term *critical thinking* I take to encompass both *analytical* and *speculative* thinking: the former involving the process of examining closely the constituent parts of some idea or entity so that their nature and the relationships between them can be better understood, and the latter involving the process of extension through the positing of new possibilities (the "what if..." process). Furthermore, all critical thinking involves the adoption of an attitude or disposition of *reflective scepticism*, which in itself demands an objective approach to the matter being considered, a willingness to suspend evaluation until the evidence is (by the current standards of the discipline) convincing, until counter-possibilities have been exhausted, and so on. The purposes of critical thinking can be many, but in the academic context the purpose is most often the production of a *reasoned argument* in support of a particular conclusion; and reasoned argument, to be persuasive, must be *strategic*, that is, it must be presented in a discourse or rhetoric that is appropriate to the audience. These terms will recur throughout the following "reasoned argument".

In this paper I want to examine some of the implications for the EFL (English as a Foreign Language) classroom of this triple perspective on critical thinking: the generic skill of thinking critically; the social and cultural constraints on the expression of such thinking; and the specific focus of critical thinking within the context of academic disciplines. I suggest that EFL teachers have a crucial role in developing their students' ability to engage in critical thinking: through alerting them to the specific nature and practice of this behaviour in academic settings, they enable their students to become familiar with the discourse required to express their own knowledge and views effectively.

The universal disposition towards critical thinking

In preparing our EFL students to meet the demand for critical thinking in undergraduate and graduate studies in western universities, we need to begin by clearing out of the way some common preconceptions and stereotypes about students from non-English backgrounds.

Firstly, we must recognise that our students are already very competent critical thinkers; they are not "deficient" in the skills of logical analysis nor in their attitudes of critical appraisal. As adults, they draw on such skills and attitudes in every facet of their daily lives. As in all societies, the students come from communities in which critical sensibilities and discrimination are integral to the maintenance of the local culture and society. But such generic capacities have always to be adapted when they are directed to a particular purpose and focused within a particular context. In Australian universities all students, whether local or international, have to be explicitly and gradually inducted into the cultural demands and discourses of their particular fields of study. Undergraduate courses are structured to help first-year students make the transition to the intellectual demands of university study within a range of disciplines; at graduate level we more often tend to assume this socialisation has already taken place, forgetting that students transferring to a new university or students transferring across national boundaries may not, in fact, share a common tradition.

Secondly, we must keep in mind the obvious, yet often overlooked, recognition that "logic" and "reason" take different shapes in different contexts and according to variations in values, assumptions and rhetoric. Horton (1967) has argued this point very convincingly in relation to scientific thinking in African societies. If we take a more immediate example, a western agricultural expert and a Balinese rice farmer may well reach the same conclusion about the possibility of introducing a new crop regime; but they will use very different evidence, reasoning and justification in coming to that conclusion. One will draw on formal analysis of soils, on experimentation with new hybrids, on computer modelling of maximum yields and optimum conditions for growth; the other will rely on the traditional experience of the community, on local knowledge, and on strategies to gain the approval of the deities who are responsible for crop fertility. Each is working according to a logic and reason that is "universal" within their respective communities. Similarly, universities (despite their claim to "universality") are often more "local" in their expectations and intellectual practices than we realise; and a successful student in a university in one society may not be so successful when moving across national boundaries. The universal disposition towards critical thinking

must be adapted to local circumstances, or else it may not even be recognisable in a new context.

Cultural and social influences on critical thinking

Once we recognise that universities, far from being "universal", are strongly influenced by the cultures which nurture them, we can probe further and also recognise that our attitudes to knowledge are themselves culturally shaped (Ballard & Clanchy 1991). Thus responses to such questions as "What is knowledge?"; "Who has knowledge or where can it be found?"; and "Can knowledge be questioned, and, if so, by whom?" are all dependent on values that are deeply held in each particular culture. In some societies knowledge may be said to reside in a particular text or texts; in some it may be carefully handed down from great thinkers in the past; in some it may be an ever-changing and expanding set of beliefs and evidence. In some societies such knowledge may be largely equated with age and seniority; in some it may be gender-distinguished; in some it may be found most readily among the brightest of the youth. In some societies a university may be regarded as a centre of hierarchy, with certain texts, certain senior academics, certain courses being revered above others - and with students necessarily low in this hierarchy; in others a university may be a centre of intellectual exploration in which teachers and students, though differentially, can both seek to challenge and extend existing knowledge. Both institutions are "universities" but each is reflective of deep-seated cultural values which shape the educational system.

In many societies in Asia and the Pacific, for example, the classroom may not be the appropriate context in which to voice criticism or challenge the views either of academic staff or fellow-students. In such cultures the respect for the teacher, the respect for the text and the respect for the personal reputation of each individual in the classroom will inhibit public expressions of criticism. But that does not mean that critical thinking is not taking place; merely that it is not being transformed into public speech and behaviour in this setting. Outside the classroom there may well be vigorous criticism and discussion amongst students, and even (though more rarely) between some staff and some students. By contrast, in most western universities criticism, challenge and argument are considered to be indicators of lively intellectual debate, the very hallmarks of seminars and tutorials. The often aggressively competitive spirit of these academic exchanges can be quite distressing to students from cultures in which such behaviour is not appropriate; difficult to handle for a silent and timid observer, personally devastating when the criticism is directed at a student who has finally dared to participate.

Intellectual and behavioural disjunctions are also likely to arise in relation to the ways students are expected to read written texts and to write their own essays, reports and theses. Many international students are reluctant to question, much less criticise, their textbooks and the readings which they have been assigned to study. Yet in a western university it is assumed students will read with an attitude of reflective scepticism, questioning what they read in the light of other readings, other findings, other values. For some students this attitude can be terrifying ("How can I know what I should think?"); for others it may be dizzyingly liberating ("Suddenly I found I could question everything"). Similarly, writing from a basis of critical thinking presents particular challenges, common to all students and to all academic writers, of finding the structure and language for presenting an effective argument in a form that, because it is written or typed, seems more dangerously final, assertive and permanent. International students have also to struggle with the frustration of composing in a foreign language and, even more importantly because it is less easy to recognise, with a shift in rhetorical style (see the extensive literature on cultural influences on rhetoric initiated by Kaplan 1966, including Clyne 1987 and Hinds 1987).

It is clear, therefore, that the expression and practice of critical thinking and analysis is strongly shaped by culture. It is culture that determines what can be questioned, by whom, where, and for what purpose. The capacity for critical reflection may be innate; but the ways in which it is practised and expressed are culturally determined. In some contexts the underlying social values of consensus, of community harmony, of social hierarchy, common in many non-western societies, may militate against the open expression of critical thinking. By contrast, in the western education system the value placed on "constructive challenge" and on individual autonomy encourages critical argument in public, in the classroom, and between teachers and students. A hierarchy of power still exists, teachers are still teachers and students students; but challenge to ideas and claims is not merely acceptable but expected. Far from being a hindrance to scholarship, such challenge is the very means by which western scholarship proceeds.

The line between what is appropriate behaviour in private and public arenas is also drawn according to cultural distinctions (think, for a moment, of the cultural minefield underlying the question: "How old are you?"). In many societies the classroom is a particularly public arena: there is the "spectacle and festival" of Hwyl Coleman's analysis of an Indonesian lecture (Coleman 1987) in which the students form the "audience" by the fact of their presence but not by any requirement for participation; and the "performance" of the English language classroom in China (McClure 1995) where neither teacher nor student wishes to embarrass the other by a poor response and so both teacher and student may apologise if a student cannot reply to the

teacher's question. In this public performance the speaker and content (like the actor and the script) become identified: to criticise the content *is* to criticise the speaker. By contrast, in the western university classroom, students gradually learn that the issue being discussed can be objectified and made separate from the speakers engaged in the discussion - a weak argument will be challenged but *ad hominem* arguments are considered to be fallacious.

Critical thinking within academic disciplines

When we transfer this recognition of the cultural dimensions of the expression of critical thinking to the academic world, we need also to recognise we are moving into a strangely distinctive university culture encompassed within the broader social culture. The university is a peculiar world, with its own linguistic variations, its own rules and values, its own hierarchies, and its own approved behaviours. And again, within each university there are the distinctive sub-cultures of each discipline, definitively termed "tribes and territories" by Tony Becher (1989). A student entering a university must learn to recognise and then replicate each set of appropriate cultural norms, in particular, the styles of critical discourse appropriate to each field of study. Although it is comfortably assumed that graduate students are already "naturalised" within their disciplines, in the case of international students this naturalisation may have taken place not only in another language but also within another set of broader cultural determinants.

For example, the raising of questions can be a major problem for some international students, yet a key factor in the generation of critical thinking is the formulation of productive questions (see Ballard & Clanchy 1984, ch.5 for a more extended discussion of this point). The international student who felt liberated by the possibility of "questioning everything" still has to develop the skill of using questions productively, to probe the claims of others and to develop new interpretations of the evidence available. Questions which clarify facts must be followed by questions that focus on the inferences and interpretations which can validly be derived from such sources. Sophisticated questions move smoothly within the information - evaluation - speculation continuum. And, just as critical thinking can only take place within a specific context, so too productive questions are both shaped and constrained by the questioner's own knowledge of the field, by his or her status within the academic community, and by the public forum or private meditation in which the questions occur. The critical questioning which takes place within the student's mind is the essential initial step for any critical thinking. It is when such questions must be raised overtly and publicly, in a tutorial or seminar discussion,

or in a conversation with lecturers, supervisors or colleagues, that the importance of presentation becomes salient. Many international students need models of appropriate ways of raising critical questions and practice in intervening in an academic discussion, for these are skills which they may not have developed in their past educational experience.

Whereas critical thinking is a behaviour appropriate to all academic study, the ways in which such critical thinking is expressed will be shaped by the focus, concerns and values of each discipline (Nelson *et al.* 1987). If our EFL students are continuing their studies within a familiar discipline, then the adjustments they must make to the demands of an Australian university will be of the broad cultural order discussed above. If, however, they are changing disciplines, say moving from a first degree in Social Sciences to a graduate diploma in International Law, or from an undergraduate qualification in Biology to a graduate course in Environmental Management, then it is not just the content that will change but also the terms of the argument. Whereas in the Social Sciences the students may have become accustomed to applying broad theory to particular case studies, in Law they must focus very closely on analyses of key cases (presented as texts) and interpretation of the appropriate law; whilst in Biology they might have experience in lab work and may have drawn conclusions based on experiments and on the past findings of other scientists, in Environmental Management they must deal with modelling rather than experimentation, with behavioural theories rather than verifiable and quantifiable data. They must, in other words, internalise the appropriate tribal culture.

The language of critical discussion is also shaped by disciplines, not merely in relation to content but according to the dominant ideologies and conventions of each discipline. For example, a recent study of examiners' reports on PhD theses (Ballard 1995) found that different terms of evaluation were favoured in different fields. Candidates in Botany and Zoology were commended for their display of "mastery of techniques", "precision", and the "conclusive solution of an interesting problem". In the Social Sciences, Political Science theses were rewarded for "painstaking research of archival material" and "subtlety and brilliance of analysis" leading to "conclusions that are logical and convincing"; and, in the Humanities, History theses were praised for demonstrating an awareness of "alternative theories and explanations" and "the power of a central interpretative idea". Criticism could also be discourse-specific: English Literature theses were criticised for being "banal", "dogged" and "workmanlike"; History theses were criticised for being "fanciful" and "assiduous"; Political Science weaknesses included "polemical style" and the use of "straw men in the argument"; and in Botany and Zoology there was criticism of "unwarranted speculation" and "a lack of rigour". Thus although all disciplines

strive for the highest quality in their research, the language used by each to articulate their central values will reflect their own tribal culture.

A possible methodology for encouraging critical thinking

These variations in language and behaviour among disciplinary contexts provide the greatest challenge to EFL teachers faced with a class of students who are being prepared for a range of graduate studies. It may be possible to practise some broad strategies of critical thinking; it may be feasible to draw comparisons between local university practice and that of Australian universities in general; but to provide these students with initial insights into the behaviour and discourse appropriate for each discipline seems an almost insurmountable problem. It often results in the abandonment of such a goal in favour of the more manageable attempt merely to deal with critical thinking in terms of "popular" culture and materials only. Yet such a response is clearly inadequate to the students' needs. What more, then, can we do to develop critical thinking in our students, given the constraints of the EFL classroom?

For a start, we must look critically at our own EFL classrooms and practice in order to understand the context within which our students are absorbing not only language competence but also a set of attitudes that derive from the teaching ethos that we have established. There are a number of problems here. One problem is that in the EFL classroom the teacher is, necessarily, the authority on the language. Indeed much of our teaching is designed to elicit reproductive learning rather than critical thinking; and most of our students are completely satisfied that this is so. (It is only students of Linguistics who may be interested in the analysis of the language, or the pedagogical theory underlying the classroom methodology - the majority of our students regard English as a tool, not as an end in itself.) A second problem is that many of the students will have greater expertise in their own disciplines or local knowledge than the EFL teacher, so the traditional pattern of the EFL classroom may be disturbed if the teacher moves away from traditional language teaching materials and begins to use discipline-based texts. A third problem is that while much of the learning in the EFL classroom focuses on oral communication, critical thinking in the academic context is much more closely based on the analysis and production of written texts, and even in oral contexts its expression is still much closer to the written discourse within the discipline than to daily conversation. As John Clanchy (personal communication) has pointed out: "It is the written forms (syntactically and semantically elaborate, complex, extended)

that must be mastered before oral performance of the same forms can be confidently realised in action”.

Following this brief critical analysis of the EFL classroom context and practice, we need to consider a possible strategic response. Let me suggest a three-stage program for the introduction of EFL students to the nature of critical thinking in an academic context, using analysis of written texts to reveal the reasoning and rhetorical strategies inherent in academic writing:

- (i) If possible, start with **an example of your own writing**, preferably in relation to EFL teaching as you can then confidently provide a commentary not only on the standard linguistic markers of reasoned argument (e.g. *first*, *second*, *however*, *therefore*, etc.) but also on the strategies you used to give your article a context within the competing theoretical approaches of language teaching and on the ways in which you carefully worded sentences to cut off objections, to refute counter-arguments, to indicate your own view, to persuade your reader to agree with your proposals or conclusion (see Taylor 1989 for a useful discussion of 12 types of motives in persuasive writing). In other words, take the students *inside* the text; let them see how it has been structured through critical thinking. By all means invite their criticism too, and criticise yourself if you can now see ways in which you might still edit the text. In this way you will be opening their minds to the possibility that, in the words of an Indonesian student, “everything is open to question”, including the printed word and including the ideas of the lecturer.
- (ii) Find an **article in a formal academic journal** (not a “popular” journal such as *Scientific American*), or even a passage from a textbook, which is presenting and justifying a fairly straightforward piece of research; is clearly structured overall and at paragraph level; and, where possible, has generated discussion or responses in later issues of the same journal. This will take some searching, but once you have found a suitable article you can recycle it in later years. (If most of your students are from one discipline, or one area of disciplines such as Life Sciences or Social Sciences, then your task is obviously easier. Use the original article as material for the whole class to analyse in relation to the structure of academic presentation and its persuasive intent. It can also become the basis for generating some critical discussion. You can then turn to the later responses in the same journal as a trigger for further analysis of critical thinking and the appropriate discourse in which to present it.
- (iii) Get each student to bring along a **journal article from their own discipline or area of specialisation**. Make copies for yourself (as these can be a useful

resource for later teaching), and get students to analyse the articles in pairs both for the structure of the presentation and for possible points of critical response. This might lead to an oral presentation or to a couple of paragraphs of written commentary. Depending on your students, you may even be able to get them to bring pieces of their own academic writing for criticism (in pairs), focussing on the structure and on criticism of content or inference appropriate within the discipline.

Depending on the range and needs of your students, there are many variations you can develop on this basic pattern, although always within the constraint of using real materials rather than artificial or simplified models. For example, you can take an article with a clear structure which includes a concluding section and study it in class, without the final section. Then ask the students to outline or write a conclusion that can be derived from the material and line of argument presented so far in the paper, and compare their responses with the author's own conclusion. Alternatively, you can create a similar exercise to practise writing the introductory section, or the abstract. In all cases you are encouraging the students to reflect on the process of creating a written argument and presenting it persuasively and according to the logic of the discipline in which it is situated.

Of course there are problems with such a process. For example:

- (i) It may be difficult to find an appropriate "common" article. I have seen this problem well handled with graduate students by John Swales, who used a common corpus of Applied Linguistics articles on academic discourse and then, as an assignment, required the students to practise their critical and analytical skills on articles within their own disciplines or even on their own thesis chapters. (The articles by McDonald 1989, Hinds 1990, and Taylor & Chen 1991 might be a suitable starting point.)
- (ii) It may be disconcerting when students bring material from disciplines in which you, as a language teacher, are not competent. But this can be a very important stage in the students' development of confidence in which you genuinely share control of the learning process with them. You, as language teacher, do not have to know everything about fungi in oat seeds in order to decode a Botany article - and where you feel uncertain you can refer to the expertise of your students. This is the context in which they can begin to move towards a more equal intellectual involvement in class discussion.

- (iii) Allowing, even encouraging, your own work to be criticised publicly may seem unduly masochistic; but it will be a major revelation to your students (and maybe to you too!). I have seen this process operate in some short courses in Indonesian universities, and it was the public criticism of the visiting Australian professor's own article that was a turning-point in the readiness of the participants to both give and receive criticism productively.

Through some approximation to this process, students in the language classroom can be gradually introduced to critical thinking and to the disposition of reflective criticism which is focused on the object, the written text, rather than on the person, the author of the text. Then, even more gradually, the hierarchy of teacher/student, expert/learner can be reshaped into a common search for a valid critique or a persuasive conclusion. And, most importantly, the language of academic discourse becomes a tool for intellectual discussion, and not an end in itself unrelated to real content and an authentic context. As EFL teachers, we must give our students both the language and the experience through which they can become "professional" critical thinkers.

Critical thinking is critical for development

Competence in the language of critical discussion is not all that the students will gain from such classes. What we are very carefully inculcating is that important *disposition* for reflective scepticism, not merely the trick of imitating critical thinking through mimicking the language in which such thinking is expressed. We are cultivating and shaping an existing critical capacity that extends each student's intellectual competence. And this, I would argue, is probably the most important skill these students can later bring to the development needs of their nation. In relation to international development projects, to national policy decisions, to local planning and operation of new schemes, to review and revision of existing procedures, the constructive application and the confident expression of critical thinking are essential.

Experience has shown that appropriate development cannot take place unless the project or process has been adapted to local needs, shaped to meet the local conditions and customs, and accepted as advantageous by the local people. It is often our students who will serve as the intermediaries between international development planners and national and local needs. There is a crucial difference between producing students who are fluent in English and can serve as translators but who have no

other significant input to the process in hand, and producing students who are fluent in English and are confident in their ability to contribute to development because they can also think critically, independently and constructively in their field of expertise and are able to present their ideas so convincingly to the outside experts that their contributions cannot be ignored. If, in the future, our students merely serve as mouthpieces for the planners, then there is little chance of that development project taking root or taking the form that is most likely to succeed in local conditions. We are merely producing a variant of colonial rule, of hierarchical decision-making which negates the local knowledge and expertise of the people who are "being developed".

As language teachers, one of our initial tasks is to encourage these students to join in discussions, to express their views in such a way that they will be accorded respect in a seminar, at a conference or in a development project. Such active encouragement is necessary, in many cases, because joining in public debate (as we have seen) may not be culturally appropriate for junior staff, for women, or in situations in which social hierarchy requires that seniority be accorded unchallenged respect. Yet there may be a catch here: by encouraging our students to think critically and articulately about important issues, are we in fact making them alien to their own society? I think not. There are many ways in which critical thinking can be transformed into productive change; it is not always necessary to employ the confrontationalist western style of public challenge and argument, which is only productive in a society that accepts this style as "normal". There are, in other cultures, many ways of saying "yes" when you mean "no", of slowly and steadily initiating change. If our students have truly developed a capacity for critical thinking, they will also have the capacity for developing culturally-appropriate strategies to articulate and initiate new ways of solving long-term problems.

Raised expectations about the utility and recognition of their expertise after they return home is another problem we may create for our students. I have met students in Asian countries who have returned from studying in Australia and found that their newly-acquired skills were resented by their colleagues at home, especially by more senior members of their group who feared that change would lower their authority. At first these students were angry at this rejection of their hard-won expertise. One student, a year after her return from foreign studies, complained to me: "I have put all my new knowledge on the shelf, because neither my professor nor my students will allow me to change anything". Another explained: "Life in Australia was like a dream. I had all the equipment I needed. Here there is nothing; and my brain has stopped". Yet ten years later that first student is now the Director of a language centre which is staffed by local teachers mainly trained overseas

and which is run on the basis of a very skilful blend of new methodology and local classroom behaviour. And the second student is now a very senior scientist in his country who is taking a lead in the development of appropriate technology there, adapting the impossibly expensive equipment he used in Australia to a more appropriate level for the development of his own country's resources. In both cases these students had to learn English; in both cases they had to learn new skills and develop their expertise in their own field; and, most crucially, in both cases they had to develop that disposition for critical thinking which enabled them to achieve the developments they valued in ways that are truly appropriate to their own societies. And they had to allow time for such developments to take root.

One final issue remains: to what extent, especially in an academic context, is critical thinking truly "critical"? How far is it used to seek new or better resolutions to problems, and how far is it merely a game, bouncing one authority off against another to display the range of one's own erudition and expertise? In one sense the motives for engaging in critical thinking can only be evaluated within particular contexts. In academic life, as in political and social life, there are occasions and there are individuals who transform all interactions into power games. And if our students have to become involved in such behaviour in their careers, then they must learn how to play competently. Constructive critical thinking, I would argue, in the form in which it is exercised in universities provides an even more useful apprenticeship for our graduate students. They learn to read widely and listen carefully before they select the authorities they will quote, imitate and use as counters in presenting their own arguments. As apprentices, these students learn by imitation and practice; later some of them will become masters, in their own right, in the creation or application of new knowledge and skills in their own professions in their own countries. Engaging in critical thinking ceases to be a cynical game when critical choices have to be made. In such a context our students, who will be future leaders in their fields, need to be able to demonstrate that critical thinking is a valid, acceptable and productive behaviour.

It is in this nexus between language, knowledge and critical thinking that true development can occur; and the development of critical thinking must start in the pre-departure English classroom. Critical thinking is indeed critical to the success of all development, both personal and national.

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Quadrant IV

LANGUAGE AND THE POLITICS OF DEVELOPMENT

Empowering women language teachers in Cambodia

Kath Copley

Abstract: At a time when language teaching in many parts of the world is increasingly a female domain, the reverse is true in Cambodia. Most English language teachers, in both formal and non-formal education, are men. In a country where women are renowned for their strength, they play a remarkably minor role in the language education of young Cambodians.

The majority of young women drop out of school before completing their high school education because of pressures in the home; for the same reason, they also miss out on non-formal language classes. Consequently, women have little chance of reaching the level required for entry to English language teacher-training courses. This situation leads to a vicious circle whereby there are no women teacher role models, so there is no goal for women students to strive for, so women fail to make the grade for the teaching profession, and so there are no role models.

This cycle needs to be broken. This paper suggests ways in which language teacher-training projects in the developing world, and specifically in Cambodia, can begin to engage the power of women.

Men are gold. Women are cloth.

Strong as an ant, mighty as a spirit, dauntless as a woman.

(Cambodian proverbs)

A brief history of language education in Cambodia

Previous to the genocidal Pol Pot regime, French had for a long time been the second language of Cambodia, although English was taught to some extent. During the years 1975 - 1979 it was unwise to admit to knowing a foreign language, for fear of being labelled a pro-American collaborator and being summarily executed. Most teachers either were executed in this way or fled the country.

In the years following liberation in January 1979, the arduous process of rebuilding the education system was hampered by the country's lack of educated personnel. Most of the aid for the rehabilitation of Cambodia was donated by other socialist countries: the (then) Soviet Union, Vietnam, East Germany and Cuba among others. Assistance from these countries offered the only opportunity for Cambodians to learn vital skills which had been lost during the previous four years. The state school system catered to this need, and Russian and Vietnamese became the official second languages taught in schools.

From 1979 - 1988 it was still illegal to teach English or French. Even so, despite regular raids by the police, these languages continued to be taught and the demand continued to grow. In 1989 the decision was made to reintroduce English and French into the state school system from 1990. With the arrival of the United Nations Transitional Authority in Cambodia (UNTAC) in 1992, there was a boom in demand for English, as many Cambodians saw a working knowledge of the language as a passport to a well-paid job.

However, the decision to reintroduce English and French was taken without any plans being made to provide teachers or training for teachers. Consequently, although many schools now teach both languages, the abrupt change in language teaching policy has caused severe stress to the Ministry of Education, as the schools have insufficient numbers of English language (EL) teachers. School directors are under immense pressure from parents to provide EL classes; however, the demand for teachers far outweighs the supply.

In response to this problem, a number of non-governmental organizations (NGOs) have set up EL teacher-training programmes. In 1990 the Quaker Service of Australia (QSA) initiated a series of intensive eight-week in-service training programmes for EL teachers from around the country. These courses, while focussing primarily on language upgrading, also dealt with aspects of methodology, and they benefited many teachers. QSA also set up a five-year Bachelor of Education (BEd) programme at the University of Phnom Penh (UPP), the aim of which was to produce teachers for the second cycle of secondary education, Years 9-11. In 1994 this programme, funded by the Government of Australia, was taken over by a team from the University of Canberra, and the completion time was reduced to four years. There is currently no pre-service EL teacher-training for the first cycle of secondary school, Years 6-8.

The CAMSET Project

The Cambodian Secondary English Teaching (CAMSET) Project, funded by the Overseas Development Administration (ODA) of the British Government, was set up towards the end of 1992 in response to a request from the Government of Cambodia to provide emergency teacher-training for secondary-level EL teachers. In the hurried switch-over from Russian and Vietnamese, teachers who knew only a modicum of English were being detailed to teach the language in the state system. They were given no training, and often their language proficiency was so low that they were only one step ahead of the students - if that. As a pre-service course for upper secondary-level EL teachers already existed, the CAMSET Project concentrated on giving in-service training to lower secondary-level teachers.

The Project has established a 180-day programme, equivalent to a one-year full-time training course and organized on a system of three "blocks" - Block 1: language upgrading; Block 2: core methodology (vocabulary, grammar, speaking); and Block 3: language skills (reading, listening, writing). Selection for entry to the course is based on performance on a language proficiency test. The language upgrading component of the course aims to take teachers from a pre-intermediate to an intermediate level of proficiency.

Under-representation of young women in secondary education

Women comprise 54% of the total Cambodian population. Despite this, the number of girls enrolled in secondary schools is a mere 30% of the total secondary school (lower and upper) population. The Asian Development Bank (1994) provides the following detail:

Secondary enrolment patterns are characterised by an under-representation of girls. Boys outnumber girls 3 to 2 in lower secondary schools and 3 to 1 in upper secondary schools. The enrolment of girls falls from 42% in Year 6, the first year of secondary school, to 17% in Year 11, the last year of secondary school. The under-representation of girls is particularly marked in Years 10-11, which is a critical stage in terms of access to further education.

In terms of the Cambodian education plan, second language learning and teaching is a low priority area. Much more important is the provision of basic literacy, numeracy and health education. In the future, however, language learning is likely to become a higher priority. As Ablin (1991) points out:

Modern knowledge can be accessed only in English. A country without real access to English language materials is shut off from modern knowledge. Substantive choices are altered by the lack of such knowledge, as is efficiency in planning and implementing those choices which are made. Innovation now largely depends on English language knowledge. A society without substantial language skills is a society that is severely restricted in its ability to determine how it shall live.

Denying women access to language education, then, effectively denies more than 50% of the population access to potentially vital information.

Under-representation of women trainee language teachers

According to ODA guidelines:

It is ODA policy that consideration of the contribution of women to economic and social development should be integrated into *all* aid activities. ODA officials, consultants and TCOs [Technical Cooperation Officers] should design projects in such a way that they have positive effects for women in development.

One obvious way in which to comply with ODA policy guidelines would be to aim to train women language teachers in numbers proportionate to the number of girl students in secondary schools. In our initial dealings with the Ministry of Education, it was proposed that the ratio of women to men trainees on the courses should be 1:1. However, this did not prove possible, as the women language teachers simply did not exist. In the first place, the percentage of women in the language teaching workforce is far lower than the percentage of young women in the secondary school system - less than 20%. (This figure includes women who have completed tertiary education as well as women who left school after Year 8 and subsequently completed two years of teacher-training in another subject.) Secondly, the number of women teachers who passed the selection test constituted less than 15% of the total number of trainees on both the Phnom Penh and regional CAMSET programmes.

The UPP BEd in English fared even worse than this. The University's 1994 intake of 100 first-year students was selected by a language test which was marked "blind", i.e. examiners were unaware of the gender of the candidates whose papers they were marking. Of the 100 students finally selected, just three were women.

Explanations

In focus group discussions with 10 of the 24 trainees currently on the CAMSET programme, two suggestions were made time and time again to account for this unfortunate state of affairs. The first was that women have no desire to be language teachers; the second, that they do not have the "ability" (i.e. the knowledge of English) to become language teachers. Both of these suggestions can be explained.

While there are numerous extra-curricular EL classes run in myriad language schools around Phnom Penh, very few of the classes are taught by women. These language classes are generally scheduled in the early morning, at lunchtime and in the evenings - all times when women have commitments at home. Furthermore, many Cambodians are cautious about being out after dark, and it is certainly not acceptable for the majority of Cambodian women to be out alone in the evening. Moreover, English is not an examined subject, and so the clientele is less reliable than is the case with other subjects. It is far more convenient - and lucrative - for a woman to teach a "voluntary" class in an examined subject such as Mathematics or Khmer literature. Such classes are taught on school premises during regular school hours. For teachers whose monthly income rarely exceeds US\$25 per month, this is a workable solution to financial problems, especially if the teacher in question happens to be among the 50% of women managing households on their own.

The second suggestion is a little more complicated to explain, because it relates to a vicious circle which is difficult to break. Indeed, it is questionable whether the circle should be broken at all as it involves values ingrained in the roots of Cambodian society. There are very few women language teachers in Cambodia, because few women attain the level of education required to become a language teacher. This lack of women language teachers in schools perpetuates the notion that language education is not important for women. Young women do not encounter other women who are academically successful, and therefore have no role models and nothing to aspire to. In this way, traditional values are constantly reinforced.

The cycle recommences

Young Cambodian women do not have high expectations for themselves in terms of their education. Neither do their families; even among middle-class families, being an eligible wife is much more important than being educated. The number of girls enrolling in and remaining at school is much lower than the number of boys. When girls *are* enrolled in school, they have a much higher rate of absenteeism than do boys. They are often kept at home to tend to younger siblings or to help

out in the family business or on the farm. And even if they *can* attend school regularly, they are still expected to help at home after school hours, and so have little time to study.

In the classroom, girls are often neglected by the teacher. Many teachers are dismissive towards the girls, and it is not uncommon to hear teachers say that their girl students are stupid. The teacher will address the boys throughout the lesson, while barely glancing at the girls. Thus, girls do not get their fair share of teacher attention even if they are fortunate enough to attend school regularly.

For the few women who complete their high school education and wish to continue their studies, there are further problems, especially for provincial students. The University has no dormitories, and even if there were any, families would be loath to send daughters away. Young women simply do not have the same opportunities as young men to continue their education, and so they fail to attain the level required to become language teachers. The cycle recommences. Thus it is that in a world where teaching, and specifically language teaching and teacher-training, is increasingly regarded as a woman's profession, the reverse is true in Cambodia.

The way forward

All of these problems relating to women's education in Cambodia need to be dealt with on a number of levels. It is important for women language teachers to become empowered. This may be achieved on a *superficial* level in a number of ways: extra language input in the form of pre-sessional language courses; confidence-building workshops; the encouragement of network-building. However, empowering *existing* women language teachers merely scratches the surface of the problem. To achieve change at a deeper level, it is essential to change societal attitudes towards education for women. If the 85% of men teachers are to work with the 15% of women to effect real change in education for girls, then dealing with gender issues must be an integral part of teacher-training courses. The CAMSET Project has attempted to address this issue in two ways on the in-service training course.

An integral part of the language upgrading block is a module entitled "Introduction to learning and teaching". This module has a number of aims: to encourage participants to explore the roles of teachers and learners and to become more reflective about their profession; to build self-confidence; to push the participants to use English to explore topics of relevance to their teaching situation. Trainees have the opportunity in this part of the programme to explore issues in Cambodian education, through

the medium of English. It is here that the issue of gender in education is introduced, through reading, group discussion and collaborative project work.

In Blocks 2 and 3 of the course, trainees have the opportunity to practise what they have learnt. They work either in a local school, where teaching practice classes are specially arranged, or in their own school. Groups of eight or nine trainees collaborate to produce lessons which one group member will then teach, while the other teachers complete an observation task. The lesson is followed by a feedback session where the trainees discuss the "good" and "can improve" points of the lesson. A number of the observation tasks focus on the teacher's interaction with the girl students; in this way, the idea is reinforced that gender is an issue in the classroom. Trainees, both men and women, become sensitised to this, and even when there is no specific "gender issue" observation task, they will comment on aspects of the teacher's interaction with the girl students in the post-lesson discussion.

This is, however, a drop in the ocean. The teachers who attend CAMSET Project training courses represent a tiny fraction of the total number of teachers in Cambodia. Importantly, this fraction does not include the policy-makers in the Ministry of Education - the decision-makers who perpetuate the status quo through their own lack of awareness of gender issues.

Conclusion

The cases of both the CAMSET teacher-training courses and the UPP BEd programme highlight the problem of EL teacher-training in Cambodia: women fail to make the grade. Given the low proportion of women in secondary school education in Cambodia, it is inevitable that the number of female candidates for EL teacher-training courses will be minute in comparison with the number of male candidates. Selecting trainees by means of an impartial test will not address this imbalance; rather it exacerbates the problem, and perpetuates the cycle.

The matter could be addressed by a massive public education campaign targeting both men and women teachers, Ministry of Education officials and candidates for teacher-training courses. However, this takes time and cannot immediately provide the female role models that young women in secondary education desperately need.

There are more contentious ways of addressing the problem. One possibility is that, in addition to widespread awareness-raising campaigns, there could be **positive discrimination** for women candidates for teacher-training courses, specifically for EL teaching. This "affirmative action" might take the form of pre-sessional

and bridging programmes which bring women up to the standard of training course selection criteria. Such discrimination need not be permanent: the reverse situation - where women teachers disproportionately outnumber men teachers - is not desirable either. It should be viewed as a solution only until the proportion of women teachers in the teaching workforce is representative of the proportion of women in the community.

Secondly, supposing that single-sex education would have the same beneficial effect on the academic achievements of Cambodian girls as have been demonstrated in a western context, **segregation** - if not at the school level, then at the class level - may be another solution. This, too, raises questions of ethics. Girls would be assured more teacher time and attention, and they would find themselves in a more affirming learning environment. On the other hand, boys are known to underachieve in single-sex classes. Again, segregation would not have to be a permanent measure, but rather an emergency measure until women held an equal stake in education.

At the February 1995 discussions in Paris of the International Committee for the Reconstruction of Cambodia, the Government of Cambodia reaffirmed its intentions to expand access to education for women. But the situation is so dire that discussion and intentions alone will not suffice. Neglecting to take positive, remedial action is a political statement, tantamount to complicity with the status quo.

Note

This paper was written while the author was employed by CfBT Education Services on an ODA project. The views are those of the author and do not necessarily represent those of ODA or of CfBT Education Services.

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Politics in the classroom: teacher-training in Cambodia

Psyche Kennett

Abstract: Since 1992 the Cambodian-British Centre for Teacher Education has been running a national in-service teacher-training course for lower secondary school teachers of English in Cambodia. The programme is hardly radical, so the political repercussions it has generated have been unanticipated. As trainers we have had to constantly remind ourselves that our Cambodian trainees survived a genocide by keeping their heads down and their mouths shut and by not sharing knowledge or resources. To be an expert in a language which was forbidden until 1990; to give authority in the classroom to the very age group that was indoctrinated against teachers only two decades ago; to question policy through objective research - interpreted in this way, the Communicative Approach becomes a radical statement.

This paper details two areas of the training course that have highlighted political issues relevant to other development projects: i) methodology: learning without an authority figure; teaching citizenship skills and democracy through groupwork; accepting that things are not always right or wrong; daring to be different in terms of classroom management; and ii) classroom research: questioning authority; setting the teacher up as a thinking practitioner; being allowed to have a "wrong" hypothesis free of recrimination.

Different agendas

When working as teacher educators on a bilateral aid project we have to ask ourselves which of four masters we serve: the donor agency, the recipient government, our trainees, or ourselves. However we might answer the question, it needs to be acknowledged that donor governments are not in the development business for the same reasons as the teacher educators who implement their projects; and that nor are the trainees who attend the programme there for the same reasons as the ministry which has sent them would have it.

Unlike the Overseas Development Administration (ODA), whose educational aims are sincere, the British Government's real interest in the Cambodian education system is as shallow as its recent decision to halt all funding to projects outside

Phnom Penh. It is interested in Cambodia essentially as a public relations exercise: to be seen to be honouring its commitment to the Paris Peace Agreements. On the other hand, the teacher educators it has employed are there to improve the quality of learning and teaching in the country through a communicative, learner-centred methodology. If the recipient ministry does not then endorse the new approach to education, how good a PR job has the donor government pulled off? Meanwhile, in the classroom, the trainee teachers may nod in agreement and "perform" the new techniques, without having the slightest intention of going back to their schools and using them. In the end we are all operating according to different agendas.

Contain or subvert?

All across Asia the forces of development are demanding a new kind of school leaver: young adults who can think for themselves, take risks, assume authority, deal with the unknown. The change has not yet occurred in Cambodia, but it has led to educational reform in countries like Indonesia and Thailand. Initiative is taught by making students independent of their teachers: teaching them to solve problems rather than copy models; having them work cooperatively in groups instead of competitively as individuals; encouraging generative thinking rather than rote learning. At the same time, however, and within the same communities, the more conservative forces of the establishment, the government and the armed forces still regard education as a power to contain, to maintain the old order by keeping people in their places. In such a traditional system obedience is taught by making students passive learners, copiers of other people's handed-down knowledge, empty vessels to be filled. In a country with as violent a history as Cambodia's, a teacher's decision to subvert or to retain the traditional ways is not an easy one.

The political plight of the trainee teachers on the Cambodian Secondary English Teaching Project is even more uncomfortable. They are being asked to excel at a language that was forbidden until 1990. They are being asked to give authority in the classroom to the very age group that was lethally indoctrinated against teachers two decades ago. They are being asked to conduct classroom research which leads them to question authority and turns on its head the idea that change must come from above. It is not surprising that some of them refuse to learn this sort of "subversion", and it would be foolish of teacher educators to treat their objections lightly.

Pol Pot or before?

One easy mistake to make when working in development in Cambodia is to assume that all problems date from the Pol Pot regime. Of course there is no arguing with the fact that the entire education system was destroyed and around 75% of all teachers were either killed or left the country between 1975 and 1979. The proportion of language teachers killed was even higher: teachers of French were obvious targets as the lackeys of imperialism, and teachers of English were clearly pro-American spies. But if it were a question of rebuilding the education system in the same way that industry was rebuilt in post-war Germany or Japan, making room for the new and the innovative, change would have occurred in the education system a lot more quickly than it has. It is not just a question of the people's deep mistrust of change (influenced, perhaps, by the tragedy that change had brought them in the 1970s). There is an old conservatism in education that predates Pol Pot - nor is it confined to Cambodia. Where did the Khmer Rouge schools learn their methods of indoctrination in the first place? The Right Answer has always been the single most important thing for a teacher to elicit from a student, and as a goal it is alive and thriving in Cambodia, in Thailand, and in other countries around the world whose education systems we have tried to influence.

The east-west continuum

Western teacher-training tends automatically to assume that learner-centredness is "right" and teacher-dominated classrooms are "wrong". This is understandable in terms of democracy and of equipping students with citizenship skills for the future. But the learner-centred/teacher-centred approaches are on a continuum, and it is illuminating to consider the extreme ends of that scale. At one end, in rural Cambodia, misbehaving children are punished by being made to kneel on durian skins for hours. Their fear of the teacher and their conditioning to obey make it possible. At the other end of the scale, in inner-city schools in London, the students run riot and make their teachers' lives hell. Their contempt for the teacher and their conditioning to question authority make it possible. In our work as teacher educators in Asian countries we must constantly remind ourselves that it is a form of cultural imperialism to assume that learner-centredness is "better" than teacher-centredness. It is important to note that in inner-city slum schools in Bangkok learning *can* occur, while in such schools in London it occurs far less easily.

Lip-service and compromise

I have, to a certain extent, been playing devil's advocate. I *do* strongly hold to the belief that training students to be independent of their teachers and giving them the means to transfer knowledge and experience from the specific to the general are the two things which are *not* happening in Cambodian schools which *should* be happening. The question is, how far along the line do we as western teacher educators pursue our own educational agenda and at what point do we make allowances for what the more conservative ministry really wants? At some point the educational impact of a training programme must be compromised in order to meet the requirements of sustainability. If not, there is a danger of the teacher educator becoming an evangelist, converting a few, perhaps, but never getting the message mainstream. Like the trainees in a training session, the ministry is happy to pay lip-service to our ideas but is not prepared to commit itself to making these ideas policy.

The dilemma is that to impose our ways is tantamount to cultural imperialism, while to do things totally as the ministry would want is to lose our sense of quality and purpose. There comes a point where we too are serving ourselves and our own educational beliefs, while paying lip-service to the ministry.

Take, for example, the new Grade 6 textbook, *The Cambodian English Course*. It is far from ideal, especially on account of its lack of motivating topics. It is very tempting not to deal with this book on training courses at all; teachers would be more gainfully employed in creating their own materials than in attending the session on "How to use the coursebook". We argue that human resources are more important than textbooks, and point out that no textbook at all is better than a bad one. We add that the syllabus and lesson plans provided to trainees are much closer to meeting the real needs of the students. But there is no avoiding the fact that for teachers and ministry alike the textbook appeals, not only because it is being used in the schools, but also because it bears a striking resemblance to the textbooks of old. It appeals to their sense of nationalism too, to have their own book, not one supplied by a foreign publisher. To counterbalance the inherent appeal of the textbook we ask our trainees to evaluate it, to identify its strengths and weaknesses, and then we work with them to design materials to supplement its shortcomings.

Political acts in the classroom

It is not just a question of materials. Much of what goes on in the training classroom would not be approved of by the establishment. Many authority figures are reluctant to recognise "simple teachers", believing them to be innocuous. They might be surprised to discover that student-to-student dictation is really all about learning without an authority figure; that groupwork teaches citizenship skills; that giving the students the last word is democracy; that changing the furniture round means daring to be different; that learning that teachers are not always right and students are not always wrong plants the seeds of dissent; that questioning the teacher means questioning authority.

Teachers, on the other hand, are aware of all the implications of a learner-centred methodology because they must deal with it on a day-to-day basis. Their complaints: "This activity will be too noisy and disrupt other classes"; "There is not time to do the groupwork"; and "Students will not be able to do this" are symptomatic of a deeper reluctance: they do not want to stand out or appear different. After all, they have survived a genocide by keeping their heads down and their mouths shut.

Seating arrangements

Teacher educators in such a situation must handle with greater sensitivity what they have previously considered to be very straightforward methodological issues. Seating is one such issue. In Indonesia, and to a lesser extent in primary schools in Cambodia, *where* students sit and what happens to them if their backs are to the blackboard is a major topic of debate. The argument is that, if you turn the tables around so that students can do groupwork, it means that not all of them are facing front, and so they cannot copy off the board. By implication, they can copy *from each other*, which worries teachers because they think of this in terms of cheating, rather than in terms of sharing or getting strong students to help weaker ones. Furthermore, those students not facing the front are thought to be at a disadvantage because they cannot follow what the teacher is saying and are prone to gazing out of the window because that is what they can see.

As a trainer it is easy to dismiss these arguments with a simple "Get the students to turn round while you are speaking and turn back when you have finished", or even, "Move the children round one place every day so they take it in turns to face the board". However, the teachers are not looking for such pragmatism. What they are actually saying in their disagreement over groupwork seating arrangements

is: "I don't want to be pushed off centre-stage. I fear I will lose my authority if students are allowed to consult each other rather than me. My power structure depends on students facing front, in rows, listening to me."

A variation on the seating debate often occurs in lower secondary schools in Cambodia where the "little boys" (usually the younger ones) sit at the front and the "big boys" at the back. The teacher usually teaches to the first three rows, which means the big boys at the back are chronically neglected. But teachers will not rotate the rows, arguing that if the big boys sit at the front the little boys will not be able to see the board. Again, appeals to logic do not succeed; the fact that girls are *not* arranged according to age and size but are all seated at the front is immaterial (apparently girls belong at the front, regardless of size).

Viewing these issues of classroom management with sympathy rather than exasperation reveals what is perhaps the strongest political influence in the school system: *teachers do not want to be different*. They want their classrooms to look just the same as everybody else's; if the big boys are not at the back the old order is being subverted.

"Because it is modern"

It is also worth mentioning at this point that many teachers in Cambodia adopt learner-centred methodology without any apparent misgivings and introduce new classroom arrangements with ease and enthusiasm. When asked what they think about groupwork and moving the tables around they will quite happily admit that they favour it "because it is modern". This, too, is a political statement: "I accept your new methodology because it represents progress and brings my country out of the dark ages." What is mildly depressing is the relatively small number of teachers who reply: "because it is a better work arrangement for the students". Needless to say, if the teachers knew that "because it is modern" was the *wrong* answer and that "because it is learner-centred" was the *right* answer, they would "get it right" next time. Too cynical an analysis? Perhaps.

Knowledge as power

In Sri Lanka, English is called "the sword" because it cuts between the classes. In Cambodia, teachers believe that knowledge in general (and English in particular) gives them power over others. Given their meagre salaries a western teacher educator

might assume that teachers in Cambodia have a real vocation (why else would they be doing what they do for US\$ 25 a month?). However, it is rare for a teacher to say: "I am improving my English so that I can provide a clearer model for my students". That teachers should want to learn English for personal gain is understandable - in Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs they are only paying the rent, after all: Improved language ability means more income-generating private classes; and so it is this area of the course that teachers want more of, not the methodology. Communicative methodology, by its very nature, is all about how to share, how to disseminate knowledge. Language improvement, in contrast, is about self-improvement.

It is essential not to be disappointed by teachers' motivations. As the training course progresses it becomes clear that, although the needs of the students do not often enter the teachers' planning, the care and encouragement they give their students is exemplary. For us as teacher educators, however, some forcing of the issue is necessary: we cannot just sit back and keep our fingers crossed that teachers will eventually learn to put learners first. In the training sessions on the course teachers are required to share knowledge on a day-to-day basis; information gaps are real and so the need to communicate is real. They are required to work in groups, to do problem-solving tasks and to learn inductively themselves. This "model of good practice" provides the impetus for teachers to transfer the new learning approach to their own students. They become more at ease with imparting information in the classroom and getting students to share knowledge instead of competing for it.

Changing roles of teachers and learners

Part of the problem is getting teachers to think of students as real entities, human beings with *dignity*. Most older teachers have no idea what children are interested in and do not feel it is their duty to find out. There are still teachers who consider it an insult if a student asks a question out of turn. The most common way of dealing with mistakes is to tell the erring student to sit down in withering tones and to turn away in disapproval. This happens time and again on teaching practice. The rationale behind such displays of raw contempt is that correction technique is the assertion of power and the means by which students are trained to *only ever* offer "right answers". The withering look is to train students not to attempt an answer unless they are sure it is what the teacher wants to hear. The repercussions of this approach are sinister if the classroom may be regarded as a microcosm of society. In effect, the "right answer" syndrome kills off risk-takers from the start and assumes a very black-and-white perspective on life.

In language learning, however, the message of interlanguage theory is that mistakes are good. They are a sign of learning, of the assimilation of new rules. Mistakes are to be encouraged, risk-takers to be praised. The process becomes at least as important as the product, and learning is negotiated between teacher and students. Correction of written work is not about covering the students' books in red ink but about using a discreet pencil line and a symbol in the margin to elicit the appropriate spelling or vocabulary and having the students correct their own work. Correction is about fostering experimentation, making learners more independent of their teachers, encouraging self-analysis, empowering the learner. And correction is only one aspect of the training. The changing roles of teachers and learners ushered in by English Language Training methodology make the teaching of English in Cambodia not so much a cultural imposition from the West as a political one.

Classroom research

One way of changing entrenched behaviour and encouraging teachers to take risks themselves is to conduct small-scale classroom research with them. An important course requirement on our programme is for teachers to design and carry out three simple classroom research projects. These might include evaluating the effectiveness of certain techniques, comparing two approaches with parallel classes, observing teacher or learner behaviour, and trialling tests or materials. The aim of this project work is to set teachers up as reflective practitioners; to empower them as experts in their subject; to encourage them to question authority by putting the traditional ways under the microscope; to enhance their powers of observation (which is at the core of all real change); and to allow them to have a "wrong" hypothesis free of recrimination. It is not easy - mainly because these aims run counter to the way most teachers have been brought up to think. Perhaps hardest of all is to make it clear to teachers that they can get full marks by saying: "My hypothesis was wrong". Giving the right answer is no longer relevant.

Through this small beginning I hope that one day teachers will be recognised by the ministry as more than "simple". Already the teachers we train are more knowledgeable in their field than almost everyone in the Department of General Education. Change has already begun from below. But the position is fragile, and one directive from an ignorant school director ("You *will* use the same old textbook, not these new lesson plans you have written!") might send the teachers back to square one.

A learner-centred system

In the past, school supervisors and inspectors were not necessarily themselves trained teachers. It was assumed that inspectors needed a university background but not experience at the chalk-face. Now, already, such an inspectorate would be unable to evaluate the classroom behaviour of the teachers we have trained. The quiet revolution that is beginning to take place in the classroom will eventually grow into a learner-centred system: teacher educators will not be appointed directly on graduation from university without first having had several years of classroom experience. Trainer-trainers will need to have both classroom experience and trainer experience. At the top of the tree, supervisors and inspectors will have to have been learners first, teachers second, and teacher educators third before they can be appointed - or at least, such is our hope.

The advantage that Cambodia has over its neighbours in this respect is that there is no supervisory system at present, and no formal educational management plan: in short, things are wide open for change. It is the responsibility of teacher educators to move beyond the classroom into the ministry and to try to influence the institutionalisation of a learner-centred approach: a democratic system based on practical experience and the desire to make education a liberating process. It may well be that the ministry is happy to pay lip-service to these ideas while having no intention of committing them to policy. Nonetheless, it is on our agenda to try.

Note

This paper was written while the author was employed by C/BT Education Services on an ODA project. The views are those of the author and do not necessarily represent those of ODA or of C/BT Education Services.

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Reaching the critical mass: planning voter education in South Africa

Sarah Slabbert

Abstract: The 1994 general election in South Africa was the first democratic election in the history of the nation that involved all its people. The success of the election depended on the effectiveness of voter education. In a period of just six months an enormous amount of information regarding the principles of democracy, the purpose of elections, eligibility to vote, the technicalities of the voting procedure and the necessity for the individual to take part in the election and to accept the outcome had to be communicated to the previously marginalised black majority. This paper gives an overview of the communication process that was developed. Specific reference is made to the multilingual nature of the communication.

Although the circumstances of the 1994 election were unique, voter education can be regarded as an exercise in reaching the South African population, in particular those sectors of the population that will be the target of the Reconstruction and Development Program which has been announced by the new Government. An evaluation of the 1993/1994 voter education campaign is therefore also an assessment of the communication structures that are available for development work - their strengths and successes as well as their as well shortcomings and problems.

Introduction

In 1994 South Africa held its first inclusive democratic elections. For the first time in the country's history African (i.e. black) voters participated in a national election. These elections took place against the backdrop of the gross discrimination of apartheid, political violence and a deep mistrust between the various participating groups.

The challenge for those involved in the development of voter education programs was enormous. South Africa has an adult population of approximately 24 million, of which 72% is African, 16% White, 9% Coloured and 3% Indian. The vast majority of the first-time voters were living in rural or semi-rural areas and approximately 40% were illiterate (Slabbert & Van den Berg 1994). They had had no exposure

to democratic structures or procedures, no experience of political tolerance, and were prey to a deeply-rooted fear of intimidation and violence.

The discourse that was developed to empower the previously disenfranchised populace to participate effectively in a national election can also be regarded as an exercise in reaching the previously marginalised majority - the critical mass. The issues that the voter education process had to deal with are therefore also those that will have to be addressed in each and every aspect of the Reconstruction and Development Program, whether primary health care, an AIDS awareness campaign or agricultural development. This paper discusses some of the most important issues impacting on this process and gives examples of how they were handled during the pre-election period.

An exercise in power politics: governmental vs. non-governmental bodies

All development work, including voter education, is to a greater or lesser extent an industry. The voter education campaign was a classic example of the power politics of development work. The issue of credibility was the pivot around which the power game between governmental and non-governmental bodies was played; this issue determined directly both which major organizations became involved in voter education prior to the elections and the nature of the coordinating structures.

Organizational bodies that were identified with the Apartheid Government were regarded with suspicion by first-time voters. The Department of Communication Services, which had been actively involved in voter education in Namibia's pre-independence elections, and which had all the structures available to organize a national campaign, lacked legitimacy. Although the Department submitted a proposal to the Transitional Executive Council (TEC), the interim national executive, it received neither a funding allocation nor, indeed, any feedback on its proposal; not a single voter education program was developed by the Department.

For this reason the voter education campaign was largely initiated and executed by non-governmental organizations (NGOs). Funding came mostly from overseas - from governmental agencies, private funds or institutions such as the European Union. The Independent Forum for Electoral Education (IFEE) was established as an umbrella organization to coordinate the efforts of the various NGOs. Membership of IFEE was voluntary; the founding members were those organizations already operative in voter education. By the time of the election IFEE was to comprise about 40 organizations. Full members were required to sign a code of conduct

committing them to non-partisanship. However, individual NGOs still faced accusations that they *were* partisan. The Matla Trust, for example, was widely regarded as a think-tank of the African National Congress (ANC), and its initiatives regarding voter education were consequently suspect in certain circles. It was also alleged that the Trust was using the IFEE structure to obtain funding for its own political agenda (André Krüger of the Rural Foundation in an interview).

The South African Broadcasting Corporation (SABC) also experienced a credibility crisis in 1992/1993, leading to the formation of the Democracy Education in Broadcasting Initiative (DEBI), a second large umbrella organization overseeing voter education. Conflicting views on the aim and the success of DEBI underline the deep distrust that existed between the players on the issue of partisanship. The IFEE viewpoint was clarified in an interview with the former Director of the Forum's Media Commission, Barry Gilder:

IFEE entered into negotiations with the SABC by directly contacting the relevant stations on the broadcasting of their material. The management was setting up its own election machinery which would have included voter education. They subsequently blocked the IFEE initiative, because they saw IFEE as a political alliance in favour of the ANC.... At the meeting... it was decided to advertise openly for any organization that wished to be involved in overseeing voter education, and we agreed to a fixed number of places in the resolving committee and that is how DEBI was founded. About 50 organizations were eventually accepted by the SABC. IFEE had officially 20 seats allocated to them. The non-IFEE members of DEBI - not all of them - had the feeling that IFEE was a biased body. None of them, however, could fault our materials.

The Independent Electoral Commission (IEC), the third major player in voter education, was an outcome of the multi-party negotiations. The Commission was to be responsible for running the elections, a task that included the provision of voter education. The IEC was in an ideal position to coordinate and financially support non-partisan voter education initiatives; unfortunately, however, it was only established when most voter education campaigns were already well under way. All the organizations I have interviewed on the subject maintain that the IEC hindered rather than facilitated coordination. Barry Gilder described his own experience with the Commission:

We had been inundated with proposals and processed them and decided which ones were feasible or affordable. The IEC came into the picture and was then swamped by the same people with very little time to process... It had many people starting from scratch thinking about voter education and that was an incredible mistake.

DEBI was promised funding by the IEC which it never received.

The target audience: demography and community structures

Most voter education organizations identified as their target audience either first-time voters as a whole or a sub-group such as rural women or squatters. The biggest challenge was the lack of information about the new eligible voters, since neither voter lists nor previous voting patterns existed. Official population information is not unanimously accepted. The 1991 census, compiled under the auspices of the previous Government, is regarded by many as unreliable. Disagreements still continue as to whether or not the estimate of the number of eligible voters based on the census is correct. According to Neil Higgs of Research Surveys, a leading market research company, their own estimate exceeds that of the 1991 census by 3 million. These "missing persons" are predominantly black and living in informal settlements such as squatter camps. The implications for the planning of voter education or other development programmes are evident. Market research companies acknowledge the difficulty of sampling accurately in informal settlements and admit that the problem has not yet been solved satisfactorily.

The Community Agency for Social Enquiry (CASE), another NGO, was commissioned by IFEE to conduct an evaluation of its voter education campaign. The fieldwork was undertaken by Research Surveys. According to the CASE Report (Everatt *et al.* 1994: 1): "Existing media research ... is detailed on white media access and blurred on black access. This is worse when rural and informal areas are dealt with." The argument is that such research studies have been designed for marketing campaigns to reach those segments of the population who have purchasing power rather than those targeted by voter education or other development programmes.

Indeed, it is interesting to note the considerable discrepancies between different estimates of the black rural population. For example, the Baseline Survey (Booyesen & Charney 1993) estimates that adult rural Africans comprise 34% of the population of South Africa, while the Language Study (Slabbert & Van den Berg 1994) gives a figure of 53%. In the case of the latter the sample was heavily skewed in favour of metropolitan interviews. Higgs (personal interview) confirms that this is standard practice: metropolitan interviews are easier and cheaper to conduct. The question arises: if it is the practice to weight the rural sample heavily, on what information is the weighting based and how accurate is it?

The attitude of voter educators towards these problems is exemplified in the following comment from Barry Gilder:

We knew that by using the statistics we can more or less reach the people that normal marketeers would reach. Our attitude was: let us look at ways of filling the gaps that we knew, partly by instinct, partly by non-marketing research were there -the informal urban dwellers, the shack dwellers and, of course, the deep rural dwellers.

Various research studies make reference to respondents' involvement in community structures such as churches and trade unions. However, I have found no evidence that the data concerning voters' involvement in community structures were utilised in a coherent and coordinated way in the planning of voter education campaigns. For example, the South African churches were certainly represented in all the voter education forums, but their enormous potential for offering face-to-face communication with particularly marginalised communities was not exploited. Church organizations come into contact at least once a month with 80% of the African and Coloured populations. Almost 75% of Africans attend church at least two to three times a month. Yet, according to the CASE Report (Everrat *et al.* 1994: 69), only 3% of African voters received face-to-face-education from their churches.

Trade unions, on the other hand, are high profile organizations within the South African context and the Congress of South African Trade Unions (COSATU) was very actively involved in voter education. However, the possible impact that trade unions can have on mass education is relatively limited, since only 34% of adult Africans are employed, and only 30% of employed Africans and Coloureds are trade union members. This means that only 10% of black voters can potentially be reached by the trade unions. The CASE Report (*ibid.*) indicates that 5% of eligible black voters received voter education from the unions.

There is not yet in South Africa a comprehensive picture of how the individual fits into the network of social structures, nor of how to make effective use of these structures in communicating with the critical mass.

Speaking the language of the people

South Africa is a multilingual, multicultural country with 11 official languages: English and Afrikaans and the nine official African languages which fall into the following language groups:

Nguni group : isiZulu, isiXhosa, siSwati, isiNdebele
 Sotho group : Sesotho sa Leboa (Northern Sotho), Sesotho (Southern Sotho), SeTswana
 Tshivenda
 Xitsonga

According to the Language Study (Slabbert & Van den Berg 1994), which assessed multilingualism among black South Africans, the breakdown of "home languages" for the adult African population is as follows:

Language	% of home language speakers
Zulu	29 %
Xhosa	24 %
Southern Sotho	12 %
Northern Sotho	12 %
Tswana	10 %

Language	% of home language speakers
Tsonga	4 %
Ndebele	4 %
Venda	2 %
Swati	2 %
English/Afrikaans/ other	1 %

Table 1: Breakdown of home languages for the adult African population

The Coloured population is predominantly Afrikaans-speaking. According to the Baseline Survey (Booyesen & Charney 1993), 77 % have Afrikaans as their home language, 17 % English, and 6 % are bilingual in the home. The Indian community, on the other hand, is predominantly English-speaking. 40 % of the African population has no understanding of English (Slabbert & Van den Berg *op.cit.*)

It will be clear from the above discussion that it was imperative that the research on which voter education programmes would be based, as well as the voter education programmes themselves, should make use of a multiplicity of languages in order to be effective. Unfortunately, however, home language figures have limited relevance for the planning of effective communication.

Home language statistics are based on the language most frequently spoken in the home, a categorization that emphasizes divisions and obscures commonalities in language knowledge and usage. For example, the languages of both the Nguni and the Sotho groups are to a large extent mutually intelligible. Home language figures suggest that speakers communicate in language blocks; that there is a single home language; that *home language* and *first language* are equivalent terms; and

that home language can be extrapolated to ethnic affiliation and identity. The figures make no provision for the multilingual individual nor for the use of different languages in different, specific contexts.

One very frustrating answer often given when respondents are questioned on language usage is: "It all depends". However, that is certainly often an appropriate response in the case of home language. In an urban multilingual setting choice of domestic language depends very much on listener and context. For example, one respondent in the Language Study reported that he would use Zulu with his mother and Southern Sotho with his father. His sister grew up in Natal, so he would speak only Zulu to her, while with his brothers he would switch freely between Zulu and Southern Sotho. The table below gives an indication of the extent of the use of languages other than the home language between close family members among "home speakers" of the five largest African languages.

Home language	Zulu	Xhosa	N/Sotho	S/Sotho	Tswana	Other
% use of another language	22.4%	29%	57.6%	57.7%	58.1%	65.9%

Table 2: Use of languages other than the home language with close family members

In a multilingual society *home language* represents a very specific user domain which is not necessarily *the* user domain indicative of first language status. It would not be uncommon for a speaker to use one language in the home, one or more different languages in the work environment, and Tsotsitaal (an Afrikaans-based slang) when he relaxes with his friends. It is therefore pertinent to question to what extent the home language is relevant in making decisions about language choices in development programmes.

A further drawback with home language figures is that they give no indication of the dichotomy between the "deep" rural and the "diluted" urban varieties, a distinction that is made by the speakers themselves. The "deep" varieties are the dialects of the rural areas, and are still regarded as being to a greater or lesser extent "pure", unmarked by European influence, rich and complex. (The term *pure* might refer to any rural dialect, not necessarily to the one that was chosen to represent the standard.) The urban varieties, on the other hand, have developed in the multilingual, multicultural urban context. They are specifically designed to make communication between different languages possible, which explains why

they are called "diluted". Slabbert and Van den Berg (1994) found the urban varieties to be much more widely understood than the "deep". This was true not only of second language speakers: urban Xhosa first language speakers reported that they were sometimes unfamiliar with "pure" Xhosa words and expressions used on radio and television.

The standardisation process of the African languages, which was exploited by the Nationalist Government as a tool of separation, was further officially promoted through the use of the standard African languages in broadcasting. The SABC propagates the standard languages on its nine African language radio stations. Advertisers are compelled to follow suit, even at the risk of losing contact with their target market. Under pressure from the advertising agencies and in the light of the findings of the Language Study, the SABC is now in the process of re-evaluating this policy.

Language attitudes and language status

Choice of language variety in communication is, however, not only a matter of understanding, but also of attitude. The standard languages are the closest to the rural varieties and are therefore associated with value terms such as: "responsible", "traditional", "church-goer" and "rural". The "diluted" varieties are associated with youth and affluence. Such associations reveal certain attitudes towards speakers of the varieties. This is not to say that one variety is regarded as "better" in every way than another: on that issue there are differences of opinion, and the acceptability of the urban varieties in broadcasting has not yet been properly tested.

Another factor crucial to communication, which is obscured by home language statistics, is language status. Although Zulu and Xhosa are the African languages with by far the largest home language populations, and despite the fact that 85% of the black population have some understanding of urban Zulu (Slabbert & Van den Berg *op.cit.*), none of the African languages has high status nationally nor is used nationally as a *lingua franca*. Language use and status run along regional boundaries.

Language preference among the black population is a complex issue. An acknowledgement of the status of English as the language of wider communication and education, and a regard for their own languages are co-existing values among Africans. This is exemplified by the answers to the three questions asked on language preferences for education in the Language Study. The first two questions concerned

parents' most important considerations in selecting a school for their children and their choice of medium of instruction for Mathematics. The third question on language in education related to the adults' choice of medium of instruction for themselves: "If you go to a school where you are taught to drive a motor vehicle, what language would you prefer the instructor to use when he/she teaches you to drive?" Whereas the emphasis in education for their children was on "an international language" and "a language that will help them later in life", indicating the English medium, 70% of the black respondents chose an African language as medium of instruction for themselves.

The role of translation

The written use of the African languages had previously been very limited. However, during the pre-election period these languages experienced an enormous boom, as it was recognized that they had an important role to play in ensuring effective communication with first-time voters. The voter education booklets, pamphlets and a mock tabloid newspaper developed by the major organizations were all translated into a number of African languages along with plays, videos and audio cassettes. According to a reliable source, the ANC alone spent more than \$ 100,000 on translations.

Unfortunately, translation is often fraught with difficulties. Material in the African languages was usually translated from an English source text. Non-African source text writers lack knowledge of the African languages and they are often insensitive to cultural differences. The translators, on the other hand, are not always sufficiently acquainted with idiomatic English. This situation is further compounded by problems of terminology in the African languages and the question of the appropriate variety to use.

The only type of written voter education material not consistently translated into the African languages was training manuals - for the very reasons mentioned above. According to Michael Weeder, National Coordinator of Project Vote (personal interview):

The training manual was developed for people who do literacy work. The first edition was translated into a number of languages, but for the second edition the trainers themselves indicated that they preferred it to be only in English as this would give them the freedom to adapt their translations to the varieties used by the relevant community.

Apart from the feedback from trainers, no information is available on the success or otherwise of the African language translations of voter education material. The CASE Report (Everatt *et al.* 1994) has, however, acknowledged that IFEE material was not as effective with Coloured voters as with African voters, an outcome which may be ascribed to a lack of sensitivity to the language preferences of the Coloured population.

Broadcast material was scheduled in such a way as to be transmitted in as many languages as possible. As Ruth Teer-Thomaselli, Chairperson of DEBI, explains (personal interview): "On radio it was relatively easy because we have the language stations... we made a point of putting everything into the different languages." For television, DEBI used a complex system of language alternation.

Identifying voter education issues

Extensive research was undertaken prior to the election by various organizations involved in voter education in order to establish the voter issues. The most extensive research specifically concerned with voter issues was undertaken by the Matla Trust in the period October 1992 - August 1993.

The qualitative research (Booyesen & Charney 1993) indicated that first-time voters were illiterate with regard to the following key issues:

- the changes that the election would bring
- the concept of free and fair elections
- electoral and voting procedures

The quantitative study investigated a number of issues that were thought to be factors which might potentially prevent an eligible voter from casting a valid vote. These were: lack of valid identity documents; lack of motivation to vote; inability to carry out the voting procedures; absence of belief in the freedom and fairness of the election. Each of these factors was sample-tested. The results of the sampling provided an indication of those areas on which voter education programmes should focus. (It is interesting to note that among African voters illiteracy was the principal cause of spoilt mock ballot papers - an indication that voter illiteracy was indeed linked to general illiteracy. At that stage it was predicted that 10% of all ballot papers would be spoilt.)

The research results indicated that women, especially less-educated, older and rural women, as well as the poorly-educated in general, should be the primary demographic targets of voter education. Young voters had the greatest problems with identity documents. Women, particularly rural women, were the least assured that their vote would be secret. The Indian and Coloured communities were the most cynical about the changes that the elections would bring.

Based on these findings, voter literacy programmes were designed to focus on the following issues:

- What is democracy?
- What is political tolerance?
- Procedural voting issues:
 - Who can vote?
 - How do you vote?
 - Your vote is secret
 - You will not be harassed or intimidated at polling stations
 - The elections are free and fair
- Your vote can make a difference: motivation to vote
- Accept the outcome

The agencies involved in voter education differed in the emphasis they placed on the broader issues. DEBI, for example, identified eight macro-themes:

- (i) Freedom and choice
- (ii) What is democracy ?
- (iii) Who is entitled to vote ?
- (iv) Meaning of the vote
- (v) Understanding party political campaigns
- (vi) How to vote on the day
- (vii) Acceptance of results
- (viii) Post-election concerns

The Voter Education and Elections Training Unit (VEETU), on the other hand, focused only on voting procedures. According to Rochene Singh, National Coordinator of VEETU, it is the practical issues that determine the success or failure of an election. The other themes identified by DEBI belong more appropriately in a long-term programme of civic education.

Choosing the media

The allocation of literacy programs among the various media took into account the fact that there was a lack of data concerning those voters that are not normally the focus of market researchers. According to Barry Gilder, former Director of the Media Commission of IFEE, the Forum tried to reach such voters through saturation of the target market and overlap by using as many different forms of media as possible.

The Baseline Survey (1993) gives an indication of the media which would be the most effective in reaching particular target populations. There are, however, certain problems with the findings of the Survey. For example, in reply to the question: "Where do you get your information about what is happening in politics in the country?", 71% of the black population gave as their response "television". However, there is an implicit assumption behind the question that the population as a whole seeks this type of information. Cross-study comparisons reveal startling differences among the findings of the various studies. According to the Baseline Survey (1993), 27% of the African population over the age of 17 indicated that they never watch television. (No time frame was given.) The Language Study (1994), on the other hand, found that 48% of the African population over the age of 16 had not watched television during the previous seven days.

It was the opinion of many that too much money was spent on television. The voter TV drama *Khululeka*, for example, cost more to produce than the total amount spent on radio material. Yet radio is by far the most powerful broadcast medium amongst Africans: 84% listen once a week or more, while 68% listen every day (Everatt *et al.* 1994: 49). By way of comparison, only 41% of Africans watch television every day. 25% of the black population has no access to television; among the poorly-educated this figure rises to 49%. At the same time however, it should be noted that people dependent on the radio for voter education appear to have been less well-informed than those whose main source of information was the television. Among the mainstream media, TV is the best educator, with newspapers second and radio third. Of all the campaign types, "television and face-to-face voter education have emerged as two of the most effective single educative media in this survey" (Everatt *et al.* 1994: 98).

An alarming pattern emerged from the data: "respondents in better-serviced areas, or more affluent occupations, were better able to access voter education. Similarly, the larger the workplace, the more likely respondents were to have received voter education from employers" (Everatt *et al. op.cit.*: 70). This is unfortunate in view of the fact that people with a high level of education require less media inputs to

learn, while the reverse is true for those with low levels of education. The CASE Report concluded that mainstream campaigns needed to be backed up by below-the-line and face-to-face campaigns in order to reach marginalized groups.

Mention has already been made above of the poor state of our knowledge about social network structures. This led to a "spray-and-pray" approach to the planning and execution of many aspects of the voter education campaigns. A few examples are given below of the strategies used in these campaigns:

- (i) **Mainstream: radio and television:** DEBI commissioned programmes according to the following guidelines (Teer-Thomaselli forthcoming). Programmes should:

- use simple, straightforward language;
- show consideration for the educational levels of the main target audiences;
- be non-partisan in content; and
- have a positive and future-oriented tone.

Each of the eight macro-themes identified by DEBI (see above) was addressed in a series of short, 5-minute TV programmes scheduled over a period of two weeks. These programmes were then re-edited into an omnibus edition which was broadcast in a second language on the same channel later in the week.

Other programs included documentaries, a game show called *Make Your Mark*, and *Khululeka*, a voter soap opera, which was also the main and most expensive contribution of the Media Commission of IFEE.

Very prominent and successful in the radio campaign were the talk shows which involved the general public.

- (ii) **Below-the-line campaigns** included audio cassettes such as IFEE's *Heal Our Land*, which combined popular music and voter education messages; a comic book produced by the Storyteller Group for IFEE; a booklet by the Black Sash entitled *You, Your Vote and the Elections* and Mobile Video Vans.
- (iii) **Face-to-face:** a methodology employed by many of the organizations involved in voter education was a "train the trainers" scheme, whereby a training pyramid was initiated at the community level. Trainers were supplied with

a training manual and supportive material, including mock ballot papers. The most successful packages were those that were designed in close cooperation with the target population and which were flexible enough to adapt in response to feedback from the trainers.

The challenge of the future

South Africa came to a miraculously peaceful standstill on 27 and 28 April 1994. Between 85 - 90% of eligible voters are estimated to have cast their vote, and only 1% of ballot papers were spoilt. This success was achieved in spite of the fact that the election date had been set only ten months previously and changes to the regulations had been handed down two weeks before the election due to the last-minute decision of the Inkatha Freedom Party to take part.

Although the voter education programmes undoubtedly contributed to the success of the elections, the CASE Report warns that it is unlikely that the "enormous national focus on the general election, a widespread desire to learn how to vote by most people, and an array of structures offering voter education" will ever be repeated in future elections (Everatt *et al.* 1994: 3). It is therefore also unlikely that the success levels of future voter education campaigns will ever again be as high.

The issues that have been highlighted in this paper have been largely dwarfed by the extraordinary circumstances surrounding the 1994 election. They will, however, undoubtedly be more salient in the organization of effective communication to a less motivated audience - as is already evident in the preparations for the local government elections in November 1995.

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Ruth Teer-Thomaselli, Chairperson of DEBI
Michael Weeder, National Coordinator of Project Vote

The politics of development: the languages of industrialization

Chaiskran Hiranpruk

Abstract: The various terminological labels used over the years to express global theories of development have tended to give the impression that the processes of development and industrialization are moving towards a finishing-line, and that, once this line has been crossed, a nation may become entitled to the designation "developed". With this goal in view, many nations of Southeast Asia have embarked upon ambitious programmes of industrialization, seeking the material benefits of the western countries. Yet the West's perception of what is a developed nation, as opposed to a modernized one, has changed subtly over that last two decades.

These days, the concept of sustainable development has become the paramount philosophy behind many western countries' development programmes. However, this notion is still in its infancy in Southeast Asia, especially in those cultures which place a high value on material possessions and status symbols. This paper argues that a change of outlook is required in the region, whereby we cease to equate "development" with "industrialization". Developing countries might then not only stop chasing double-figure growth rates with scant regard for human or natural resources, but might also avoid the pitfalls that industrialization has created in the West. The impetus for such change will come not from a nation's policy-makers, but from the population at large. It is now time for developers, bureaucrats and individual citizens to stop speaking the language of economists or sociologists and, each in his own language, to start speaking for the planet.

Introduction

It is a truism to say that language is a vital tool to express thoughts, emotions and ideas. Yet with there being around 5000 languages in use in the world today, people still find it difficult to say exactly what they mean, especially when dealing with abstract concepts and images. This problem becomes more acute when it is necessary to translate between languages as this impinges on cultural nuances, values and usages. One is never really sure if the translation conveys exact meaning rather than just an *approximate* meaning. Any student of literature will agree that reading

a book in its original language gives the reader more insight into the ideas of the author. However, there are times when reading a translation is the only option available.

So it is with the concepts of industrialization and development. At the same time, the problem of conveying the significance of these notions to different cultures is compounded by there being so many interpretations of the precise meaning of the terms. Different cultures use the same terms to refer to very different concepts. Thus, when developing countries come to "translate" these ideas, who should they listen to? Who is speaking the original language? Moreover, by the time ideas have been "translated", is there a "revised edition" of the original?

These are critical questions for developing countries at any stage of development. For many countries in Southeast Asia, they are the crucial questions of the day. The forces determining today's global concerns are indeed the "revised and updated" edition of development and industrialization. Are those who make the decisions and determine development policy able to comprehend and translate these new ideas effectively? Is it necessary to learn new concepts or is it simply a matter of re-phrasing the old? These are the questions considered in this paper.

The language of development for sociologists

The majority of the early global theories, expounded by sociologists in the 1960s, were concerned with explaining the inequalities between the countries of the world. The gap between the rich nations of the First and Second Worlds and the poor nations of the Third World needed to be justified in some rational manner, and thus it was that these arm-chair protagonists began to coin and spread their global jargon. Terms such as the "Third World" entered the lay vocabulary. Meanwhile, sociologists came up with new labels: nations were now classified as central ("developed"), semi-peripheral or peripheral (the "less developed"). Later, the focus became more geographical and the terminology changed once again to North (centre) and South (periphery). The theories underlying such labels, in language reflecting the divisions of the Cold War, laid the blame for inequality on colonialism. This later became "neo-colonialism", which basically implied the dominance of large multinational companies (MNCs) that supposedly exploited the international division of labour in newly-industrialized countries (NICs). Still later, MNCs became TNCs (trans-national companies) and NICs were transformed into NIEs (newly-industrialized economies). Finally, the term "globalization" became widespread. That is, until Ken Ohamae (1990: 1) phrased it more passively and planet Earth became the "borderless world".

The process of creating new jargon continues. Yet, despite the tongue-in-cheek approach adopted above, there is an underlying premise, not only in these theories but in industrialization policies in general, that one nation can "catch up" with another. In other words, that there is some kind of "finishing-line" and that, once a nation has crossed this line, it becomes entitled to the designation "developed". Many of the theories are couched in such athletic terms. Moreover, while a country's industrialization may be seen in terms of "finishing the race", notions such as these make no allowance either for further development once "past the post" or for the possibility of a second race. Perhaps a better analogy would be a perpetual relay race with one of the baton changes representing the defining criterion marking a nation's entry to the "developed" world. However, no matter what analogy or criterion one chooses, there is still the overriding assumption that industrialization is an evolutionary process, forever progressing towards some unspecified goal.

The language of development for economists

Determining the finishing-line for industrialization is a complicated and arbitrary process, dependent on what yardstick is used to define or measure it. Economists have their own criteria which enjoy greater currency among the general public - and especially among government bureaucrats - probably because they are quantifiable. Explaining Thailand's economic growth rate of 10% is much easier than trying to define the *Weltanschauung* of Thai society!

According to Abercrombie *et al.* (1988: 123) industrialization may be defined as "sustained economic growth following the application of inanimate sources of power to mechanize production". An industrialized society is characterized (*op.cit*: 122) by the following traits:

- (i) the creation of a cohesive nation state organized around a common language and culture;
- (ii) the commercialization of production and the disappearance of a subsistence economy;
- (iii) the dominance of machine-production and the organization of production in the factory;
- (iv) the decline in the proportion of the working population engaged in agriculture;
- (v) the urbanization of society;
- (vi) the growth of mass literacy;
- (vii) the enfranchisement of the population and the institutionalization of politics around mass parties; and

- (viii) the application of science to all spheres of life, especially industrial production, and the gradual rationalization of social life.

While this set of characteristics encompasses both social and political factors (expressed in the usual fuzzy jargon of the economist), the actual measuring of a country's performance is reduced to numbers. However, these numbers seem to take on divine dimensions and are worshipped by finance and treasury officials in a way incomprehensible to the lay person. Not only is the growth rate iconized but also the "lesser gods" of the economic pantheon (GDP, GNP, CPI index, inflation rate and balance of trade) are spoken of with hushed reverence, even though to others their names are pure gibberish¹.

There are numerous other definitions, but all come down to some sort of hard economic measurement. The inadequacy of these predominantly western² concepts has recently been challenged by the United Nations, which now attempts to measure the "quality of life" against a much more comprehensive list of both economic and non-economic factors³. However, most governments still cling to the traditional economic terms when it comes to industrialization policies and view other factors only with mild curiosity.

A closer examination of the defining characteristics proposed by Abercrombie *et al.* highlights not only their vagueness but also their absurdity. Rigid application of the first criterion, for example, would disqualify nearly every nation on earth from being considered "industrialized" due to the presence of linguistic and cultural minorities. Similarly, the reference in the final point to "the gradual rationalization of social life" is ambivalent in meaning and suited more to the discourse of philosophers than government policy-makers. Changing the wording or applying different criteria is also unlikely to solve this problem. As pointed out above, nations still cling to economic factors as the principal way to measure the rate of development. But is this approach valid in trying to make sense of today's changing world?

Moving the goalposts

Even if the list of defining characteristics given above were perfect, it would still be subject to change over time. And herein lies the dilemma facing developing nations, because this is precisely what has happened over the last three decades: the idea of development has been revised and substantially updated.

Development in the 1950s was concerned primarily with the construction of large-scale infrastructure projects - the "big is better" approach. Later, the application of high-grade scientific technology was seen as the saviour of the modern world. However, with the failure of the "green revolution" to deliver all that it had promised, the "small is beautiful" outlook began to gain credence. This developed into the ecological movements of the 1970s which have since elaborated the "sustainable development" argument. Thus what was considered developmental in the 1950s is no longer considered wholesome in the 1990s; the West has apparently awoken to its past follies. A "developed" country measured by the 1950s yardstick is not so today because in the 1990s there exist different, arguably more mature expectations.

Thus, development is more a state of mind and a measure of maturity rather than something which can be realized physically in terms of concrete and steel or more abstractly by genuflections before the venerable growth rate. Hence, the concept of a finishing-line is a myth. In practical terms, this has important ramifications for policy-makers and development planners, especially those in developing countries. If governments can grasp the essentials of this idea, they can then rid themselves of the illusion of industrialization. What good is it to pursue 1950s development goals which have been proven to cause more harm than good? Not only can developing countries stop chasing double-figure growth rates with scant regard for their nation's human or natural resources but they can also avoid the pitfalls and problems that industrialization has created in the West. In such a situation, developing countries might be in a position not only to catch up, but indeed, to overtake the West simply by "getting it right" the first time round.

This, then, is the challenge facing the developing countries. Changing their whole approach to industrialization will be very difficult due to the weight of both external and internal forces which assail them. Moreover, while the benefits will be greater in the long run, they may take longer to realize. Therefore, along with a change of direction led by a nation's government, there needs to be an accompanying change of attitude on the part of the populace. Despite the fact that poor farmers facing a constant struggle to survive are always susceptible to the financial inducements and exploitation of short-sighted development plans, the people will need to understand that not all that glitters is gold, that big is not always better, and that some technology and industrial practices are harmful and unsustainable. This change of outlook is difficult to achieve but not impossible. It has already occurred in the West and there are some signs that it is starting to occur in the Southeast Asian region.

The process starts with individuals and the cultural values they hold dear. While Asia encompasses a wide mix of cultures with many regional differences, there

are nevertheless a number of points of similarity among Asian cultures, such as the emphasis given to concepts of face, status and respect for elders. Thus, while I will use specific examples from my own, Thai culture, the argument on which they are based holds true of many countries in the region.

The language of one's culture

The concepts of face and status are intimately identified with images of the self, and social interactions allow immediate reference to these images. A person's inner emotions become reflected in the face, and his role and integrity can be determined by others by observing this face. Moreover, the presentation of the self or ego through one's social face allows any social interaction to be used as a weapon "to score points; to make the right contacts, to embarrass or put down rivals, to assert one's social superiority" (Collins 1985: 157). In Thailand, where status in the social hierarchy is important, this is reinforced constantly at an interpersonal level through both language and gesture. For instance, in Thai there are over twenty different equivalents of the English pronoun "I" depending on the relative status and familiarity of the speakers.

It follows from the use of such reinforcements that presentation is equally important to Thais. In exactly the same way as face, one's presentation is identified with the ego and projected for others to see. So, while one might not necessarily be what one eats, in Thailand one is undeniably what one wears, what position one holds and how much money one earns. In this way society creates a social role for its members and expects them to play their part. The sociologist Erving Goffman (1967) described this type of role as a "frontstage" performance, with the rest of society acting as the audience.

Examples of this type of behaviour are seen in the current fad of consumerism sweeping Asian nations. The propensity to broadcast one's status through the visual display of symbols is now greater than ever because the monetary benefits of industrialization have given the new middle classes spending power. It is a common and almost natural human impulsion to purchase luxury items if able to do so; Asians are certainly no different from anyone else in this regard, and the items they buy are recognized internationally as symbols of success: Mercedes-Benz cars, Rolex wristwatches and solid gold bracelets. Even factory girls, whose parents are still tending the rice-fields, will buy stereos and televisions with virtually their first pay-pocket.

While this consumerism is exhibited in the same way everywhere, there is, however, a slight difference in the thinking behind it. In many Asian countries, people are almost encouraged to spend money on material items simply because society expects them to. Such an attitude is related to demonstration of status. In Thailand, for example, meanness is looked down upon, whereas in societies such as Australia the ability to use money wisely and to save is regarded quite positively. In Thailand it is expected that a senior director or even a personnel manager will own an expensive car and many people will go into debt to meet this social obligation. It is not the same in the West. I read recently that British Rail have refused to buy their Chairman a company car and, instead, offered him unlimited free rail travel: such a situation would be unthinkable in Thai society.

In Thailand, these frontstage performances and presentations represent actual reality and are meant to be taken as such. The fact that the form or substance behind these "actors" does not necessarily live up to the performance is neither contradiction nor hypocrisy; the discerning Thai social audience, with proper regard for the actor's face, will not pry backstage. Again this is reinforced through language. While there are over twenty different equivalents of the English "I" in Thai, in practice it is more common usage for speakers to express the pronoun in the third person as if it were *someone else* altogether. For example, if Sompot is telling Winai that he went to the market yesterday, he might say "Yesterday, Sompot went to the market".

However, other cultures are less discreet and insist on peering behind the cultural mask. At a governmental level, the need to provide substance where it has not hitherto been required is another example of the increasing demands made in a rapidly-changing world. Attempts to address this issue ought ideally to be directed at the individual members of the bureaucracy directly responsible for implementing the nation's development policies. However, such a course of action is not without its own special problems.

Research on cultural values carried out by surveying a cross-section of over 4000 Thai citizens revealed that government officials as a group place more emphasis on socializing than on achievement (Komin 1991: 209-213). In effect, this means that the very people who are in charge of implementing development projects have low motivation to succeed in the task: they are more interested in obtaining increased power, prestige and status. In practice, this often means a condescending approach is taken to dealing with local villagers who are not as well-educated and do not possess the requisite status symbols. Komin (*op.cit.*: 197) cites the example of northeastern Thai villagers who perceived water resources as their top priority development need, while the local government officials saw public health services

as being of greater importance. It needs little imagination to realize that the "form over substance" thought-pattern accounts for the difference in perceptions: a new hospital is nicer to look at than a muddy well.

Another example is Bangkok's notorious traffic. The root cause of the problem is that there are too many cars using too few roads. However, with cars being a recognized status symbol, government attempts to rectify the situation are based on preserving the car while at the same time presenting modern technology as the only way to save the people of Bangkok from perpetual immotion in the world's largest parking lot. And so schemes such as the current sky-train project, which actually reduces road area still further, are favoured by the Government. In the eyes of the powers-that-be such projects look good and are "state-of-the-art", and therefore must be the answer. The fact that they will not reduce the number of cars on the road because society expects people to drive is not the concern of the planner. That car ownership is a social expectation is further evidenced by the Government's latest answer to traffic chaos: turning footpaths into roads (*Bangkok Post*, 26 March 1995). The poor pedestrian, who is actually reducing the traffic problem by walking, is virtually regarded as an undesirable element in Thai society. Thus, the real point of all these bureaucratic plans is not to actually solve the problem (Singapore's zoning system would go a long way towards achieving this), but *to be seen to be doing something*, because in Thai society the appearance is the reality.

This is not necessarily a bad trait in itself; it certainly leads to great social harmony. However, it should be used with discretion and it should be avoided completely by government planners. From discussions with many middle-level bureaucrats, the picture is not as bad as it appears - at this level at least. There are many competent men and women who have been exposed to changing western attitudes and are very concerned with Thailand's development. The trouble seems to lie, predictably enough, with those in power, with the actual decision-makers rather than with policy planners. It is these decision-makers whom research has shown to be suffering from greater delusions of grandeur than anyone else (Komin *ibid.*). Hence, modernization is perceived as development and the acquisition of high-profile technical infrastructure as evidence of being a developed nation. Unfortunately, without attention to detail and a change in the philosophy of acquisition, what the nation often ends up with is high-tech appliances inappropriately ordered by low-tech politicians.

Speaking one's cultural language more clearly

The solution involves more than formal education although that is certainly a part of it. Possibly, some of the decision-makers know that some of their decisions are not in the best interests of the country in the long run but, like the poor manager "forced" to buy a Mercedes, social and political pressures compel them to take a particular decision. Thus, it is really society as a whole which needs to change, and this involves either the introduction of a new set of societal ethics or a re-evaluation of those which already exist. The course of action more likely to succeed is the latter, whereby the ethics and values already operating in a society are re-evaluated, with greater emphasis given to those which seem to have been forgotten. In other words, one must speak one's cultural language more clearly.

Historically, this has been the case with Thailand. Prior to the 1932 revolution which abolished the absolute monarchy, development in Thailand - or Siam as the country was then known - was a gradual process that needed to be carefully considered lest opposition from social forces put an end to it altogether. Thus under King Mongkut the formal class system was abolished and the King's divinity renounced. With King Chulalongkorn coming to power in 1868, the government bureaucracy was gradually established and the modernization of the country began in earnest. And, while ideas and technology were imported from the West and from Japan, it was only the most appropriate technology, considered to be consonant with Thai social values, that was imported. There was, then, some discernment on the part of the Thais. However, after the 1932 revolution all that changed. Development became more urgent and there was not the same concern to establish whether such development was in accordance with Thai social values. Indeed, I would argue that the imbalances we see in Thailand's development today stem from this recent period (especially since the late 1950s), and are due to governmental acceptance of a new set of foreign values, namely those which encourage the pursuit of economic gain at the expense of social values.

Around that same time, traditional social values were also forcibly westernized by the introduction in 1942 of a series of Cultural Mandates by the dictator Phibun. Thus 1 January became New Year's Day, and men were compelled to wear western dress in public and to kiss their wives before leaving for work. Indeed, the common greeting, *sawat dee*, so frequently heard today, has only been in existence since this time. When another dictator, Field Marshall Sarit, announced a new "revolution" to industrialize Thailand in 1958, he simultaneously launched the country on to its modern development course while forbidding the teaching of traditional Buddhist texts which preached against excessive greed and covetousness⁴.

The result of all these events has been the situation we find in Thailand today: an impressive performance from a conventional economic viewpoint - high growth rate, low inflation, and so on - but a disruption to traditional social life, as farmers who have been encouraged to grow cash crops face impoverishment when world prices fall; as families break up when members are forced to seek employment in Bangkok; or as small family farms are sold to rich land developers and speculators. Today there are substantial imbalances in Thailand's wealth distribution and education. At present 60% of the population share only 23.1% of the country's wealth, while only around 20% of the workforce have been educated beyond primary school (*Bangkok Post*, 6 March 1995).

Yet these problems are not confined to Thailand: similar challenges exist in nearly all the countries of Southeast Asia. The question decision-makers must ask of themselves is: who are the beneficiaries of all this development? Perhaps if governments had shown greater vision at an earlier stage and controlled their desire to compete for the region's highest growth rate, then more balanced development might have resulted. Instead of a 10% growth rate that leaves the nation with serious social problems, might not a 7-8% growth rate have been sufficient?

This is the challenge which awaits those countries starting out on the path to modernization such as the nations of Indochina. For other countries, like Thailand, the challenge is to alter their course and to increase their global awareness so as not to be left behind in a world that is changing faster every day. The answer lies not so much with developing the infrastructure as it does with developing the correct mind-set. The economic promises of the old approach have been exposed as myths. There is no end-point or finishing-line to development; modern sky-scrapers and elevated transport systems will not replace rainforests or put food in the mouths of impoverished farmers. Decisions need to be taken with right understanding and from the right viewpoint. Changes in a nation's attitude can only arise from changes in the attitude of its individual citizens. Such changes need to be in harmony with traditional national culture yet at the same time compatible with contemporary global concerns. Traditional Asian cultures, be they Buddhist, Islamic or Taoist, have in them the flexibility to allow this. It is now time for developers, bureaucrats and indeed every individual citizen to stop speaking the language of economists or sociologists and, each in his own language, to start speaking for the planet.

Notes

1. For this light-hearted attack on economic terminology I apologize if I have offended any economists. However, many who use such terminology do so without fully comprehending the philosophy behind the terms and concepts.
2. This observation and subsequent argument is not a diatribe against the West *per se* but rather a simple statement of historical fact. The origin of the set of measuring standards matters little to the argument. The important point is that those standards used predominantly by all nations are principally economic.
3. The Human Development Index in the United Nations' annual Human Development Reports attempts to translate economic growth into human well-being. Some of the factors it combines include: life expectancy, educational level, purchasing power and access to health services.
4. See Wyatt (1984, chapters 7-10); Mulder (1992: 121-124); Swearer in Sivaraksa (1992: 133-177) and the excellent Sivaraksa (1988) for background and more thoughts on these events.

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Abbreviations and acronyms

ADB	Asian Development Bank
AIT	Asian Institute of Technology (<i>Thailand</i>)
ALESCO	Arab League Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
ANC	African National Congress
ANU	Australian National University
AT	Appropriate technology
AusAID	Australian Agency for International Development
AVCC	Australian Vice-Chancellors' Committee
BAPPENAS	National Development Planning Board (in Indonesian, <i>Badan Perencanaan Pembangunan Nasional</i>)
BEd	Bachelor of Education
BKS-B	Western Indonesia State Universities Cooperation Board (in Indonesian, <i>Badan Kerjasama Universitas Negeri Indonesia Bagian Barat</i>)
CALS	Centre for Applied Language Studies (<i>UK</i>)
CAMSET	Cambodian Secondary English Teaching
CASE	Community Agency for Social Enquiry (<i>South Africa</i>)
CBSE	Central Board of Secondary Education (<i>India</i>)
CIDA	Canadian International Development Agency
CIEFL	Central Institute of English as a Foreign Language (<i>India</i>)
COSATU	Congress of South African Trade Unions
COT	Co-trainer
CPI	Consumer Price Index
CPP	Cambodian People's Party
DEBI	Democracy Education in Broadcasting Initiative (<i>South Africa</i>)
EAP	English for Academic Purposes
ECU	Edith Cowan University (<i>Australia</i>)
EFL	English as a Foreign Language
EIUDP	Eastern Indonesia Universities Development Project
EL	English Language
ELICOS	English Language Intensive Courses for Overseas Students
ELT	English Language Training
ELTC	English Language Training Centre
ELTP	English Language Training Project
ESL	English as a Second Language
ESOL	English for Speakers of Other Languages

ESP	English for Specific Purposes
FAPERTA	Faculty of Agriculture (in Indonesian, <i>Fakultas Pertanian</i>)
FUNCINPEC	United Front for an Independent, Neutral and Free Cambodia
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GNP	Gross National Product
GOI	Government of Indonesia
GRE	Graduate Record Examination
IALF	Indonesia Australia Language Foundation
IATEFL	International Association of Teachers of English as a Foreign Language
IEC	Independent Electoral Commission (<i>South Africa</i>)
IELTS	International English Language Testing System
IFEE	Independent Forum for Electoral Education (<i>South Africa</i>)
LAELP	Lao-Australia English Language Project
LC	Language Centre
LPIU	Local Project Implementing Unit
MA	Master of Arts
MBA	Master of Business Administration
MKDK	Subject basic to major fields of study (in Indonesian, <i>Mata kuliah dasar keahlian</i>)
MNC	Multi-national company
MS	Manuscript
NCDS	National Centre for Development Studies (<i>Australia</i>)
NCELTR	National Centre for English Language Teaching and Research (<i>Australia</i>)
NESB	Non-English-speaking background
NGO	Non-governmental organization
NIC	Newly-industrialized country
NIE	Newly-industrialized economy
NLC	National Language Centre (<i>Indonesia</i>)
ODA	Overseas Development Administration (<i>UK</i>)
OSB	Overseas Service Bureau (<i>Australia</i>)
OTO	Overseas Training Office (<i>Indonesia</i>)
PDR	People's Democratic Republic
PhD	Doctor of Philosophy
QSA	Quaker Service Australia
RCMA	Resource Centre Management and Administration
RD&D	Research, Development and Diffusion
RELT	Residential English Language Training (<i>Egypt</i>)

RSA	Royal Society of Arts (<i>UK</i>)
SABC	South African Broadcasting Corporation
SARC	Self-access Resource Centre
SDL	Self-directed learning
SELTU	Service English Language Training Unit
SEU	Service English Unit
SIG	Special Interest Group
TCO	Technical Cooperation Officer
TEC	Transitional Executive Council (<i>South Africa</i>)
TEFLA	Teaching English as a Foreign Language to Adults
TESLA	Teaching English as a Second Language to Adults
TESOL	Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages
TNC	Transnational company
TOEFL	Test of English as a Foreign Language
TWE	Test of Written English
UCLES	University of Cambridge Local Examinations Syndicate
UK	United Kingdom
UNCEN	Cenderawasih University (in Indonesian, <i>Universitas Cenderawasih</i>)
UNDP	United Nations Development Program
UNSRI	Sriwijaya University (in Indonesian, <i>Universitas Sriwijaya</i>)
UNTAC	United Nations Transitional Authority in Cambodia
UPP	University of Phnom Penh (<i>Cambodia</i>)
USA	United States of America
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
VEETU	Voter Education and Elections Training Unit (<i>South Africa</i>)
WUAE	Western Universities Agricultural Education (<i>Indonesia</i>)